Arifureta: Volume 3

Chapter 1 : The Guardian of the Depths

There was no question that the Aruraune was dead, Yue was still hurt. After that event, she sucked Hajime's blood until he fainted. That was successful enough to put her back into a good mood, so they continued their journey.

Their journey continued until they had descended 100 levels from where Hajime first started. Before each level he would check his equipment and supplies. As always, whenever Hajime worked Yue would stare at him working. She was really watching Hajime rather than the work. Even now she was watching him work from his right side while relaxing. Her expression did not suit the atmosphere of the dungeon.

They did not know how many days have passed since they met, because there was no sense of time underground. Recently, Yue was displaying a more comfortable expression. She was even acting a little spoiled.

Whenever they were resting at base, she would especially get glued to him. If he laid down, she would cling on his arm while they slept near each other. Yue would embrace him from the back when he sat down. When she fed on his blood, she would cuddle him from the front. She would stay there even after she was done feeding. With a content expression, she would rub her face on his chest.

Hajime is a man. Yue with her 12 years old appearance was charming and should not easily invoke lust, but she was older than that. For the one being bewitched from that glimpse, it was troublesome. Still they were in the dungeon, the tension in the helped him bear with it. When they returned to the surface, he didn't have much confidence in resisting her advances with her adult mode. There may not be the meaning to impart…

"Hajime…as careful as usual…"

"Hmm? Ah, because its the 100th floor next. I thought there might be something there. The upper dungeon is believed to have 100 floors…just in case."

When Hajime passed the 80th floor of this place, he thought there was a possibility that the place they were in was no longer the usual "Orcus Dungeon". He had the same feeling as when he fell into the abyss. Judging from what he sensed as he traversed this level, this was certainly a basement a way off from the usual labyrinth.

Firearms, martial arts, special magic, weapons, and transmutation. After polishing these skills, Hajime had confidence in himself. He wouldn't be taken down easily. However, this place was scary enough to kill him even with his abilities.

That is why he prepared as much as possible. Hajime's current status…

Name	Nagumo Hajime	Age	17 Years Old
Gender	Male	Level	76
Class	Transmutation Artist (Synergist)		
Strength	1980	Vitality	2090
Resistance	2070	Agility	2450
Magic	1780	Magic Resistance	1780
Skills			

- Transmutation
  -
    - Mineral Appraisal
    - Precision Transmutation
    - Mineral Enquiry
    - Mineral Separation
    - Mineral Fusion
    - Replica Transmutation
- Magic Manipulation
  -
    - Magic Emission
    - Magic Compression
    - Remote Control
- Iron Stomach
- Lightning Clad
- Divine Step
  -
    - Air Walk
    - Flicker
    - Grand Legs
- Air Claws
- Night Vision
- Far Vision
- Perception
- Magic Perception
- Heat Perception
- Hide Presence
- Poison Resist
- Paralysis Resist
- Petrification Resistance
- Varja
- Magic Penetration
- Coercion
- Telepathic Communication
- Language Comprehension

His status has continuously climbed after his first demon, though he had not received much Special Magic. The stats did not increase anymore from normal monsters, but the boss or

high-level monsters still did. Just like the other demons that didn't get Special magic from eating other demons, and his stats were getting harder to raise in his state.

When Hajime and Yue finished all their preparations, they went to the stair that led them down.

The level they stumbled upon, was a very large space supported by a vast number of pillars. Each of the pillars where 5m in diameter, and each had spirals designs and vine patterns engraved onto them. Arrangement of each row of pillars was very uniform and had them spaced out evenly. There was about 30 m to the ceiling. Unlike the usual rough ground in the dungeon, this place had beautiful flat ground. The room gave off a solemn atmosphere.

They stepped into the room while they admired it. All the pillars started to shine faintly then. This got them to regain their caution. Pillars lit up sequentially towards the back of the room.

Hajime was vigilant for a while, but they decided to advance because nothing happened. They advanced while making full use of their senses and perception skills. After they progressed 200 m, they found a dead end ahead. No, not a dead end, but a huge door. A double door 10 m tall that had beautiful sculptures engraved onto it. Particularly, some of the patterns drawn on top of the octagon system

"…This looks amazing. By any chance…"

"Abode of Traitors?"

He had a feeling this was the room with the last boss. Hajime's instincts were sending him warnings, while there was no reaction from his perception skills. It was going to be bad ahead. Yue seemed to feel it too because there was sweat on her forehead.

"Isn't this the great? We finally reached our goal."

Hajime disregards his instinct and puts his bold smile on. He had no choice but to keep going, no matter what was behind there.

"…Hn!"

Yue stares at the door with an expression that told him she was prepared for it.

The two finally walked past the last pillars and advanced towards the door.

At that moment, a huge magic formation about 30 meters wide appeared between them and the door. Crimson light emitted from the magic, and it pulsated.

Hajime recognized this magic. He couldn't forget it, it was the magic that triggered because of the trap that day and caused him to fall into the abyss. But the magic formation for the Behemoth was just 10 m in diameter. The magic formation in front of them was 3 times larger than that, and it was a lot more complex and detailed.

"Hey hey, what's with this size? Is it really the last boss?"

“…It’s fine…We won’t lose…”

As expected, Hajime smiled. Yue caught one of his arm tightly with a determined expression on her face.

Hajime nodded at Yue’s words, and glared at the magic formation. Seems like they wouldn’t be able to advance if they didn’t defeat the monster that came out of that magic formation.

The formation shined more and more till it finally burst. Hajime and Yue held up their arms to prevent the light from blinding them. When the light disappeared, it was there…

A monster 30 m in length, 6 heads with long necks, sharp fangs, and dark red eyes. Comparably to the Hydra of the myths.

“”””””””Kuruuaan!”””””””””

Those six pair of eyes stared at Hajime as it gave off a strange roar. It seemed to want to bring judgement upon the intruders who didn’t know their place. A fierce thirst for blood, that would have stopped an ordinary man’s heart, was flung at Hajime.

One of the heads with a red crest on it opened its mouth as flames emitted from it. The flames were already on the scale of a huge wall.

Hajime and Yue jumped to the right and left to start their counterattack. Hajime fires Donner at the red head. The bullet blew off the red head.

When Hajime pumped his fist in the air at his victory, one head with a white pattern shouted. White light wrapped around the red head and restored it fully, like time had been reversed. The white head seems to be able to use healing magic.

Yue had launched an ice shard at a green head and blew it away. However, the result was the same as the red one when the white head casted its spell.

Hajime started to speak with Yue through the “Telepathic Communication”, while he tsked.

(“Yue! Aim for that white head! Or it’s endless!”

(“Okay!”)

The head with a blue pattern shot out a gravel of ice from its mouth. Hajime and Yue were aiming for the white head while they avoided the shot.

Bang!

“”Scarlet Spear”!”

A flash of light and a blazing spear shot towards the white head. However, the moment when it was about to hit, the yellow head quickly went into the line of fire and bloated. The head shined yellow and took both of the attacks head on. After the attack settled, there was a flawless yellow head glaring at them.

“Tsk! A shield. That head shields the healing head, a nice balance.”

Hajime threw an incendiary grenade over the heads. At the same time, he fired Donner at the White Head with full power. Yue helped by firing off her “Scarlet Spear” in rapid succession. Her “Azure Sky” may have surpassed the yellow head and hit the white head, but she would be easy prey after using such a strong spell that would exhaust her. She may be able to recover fast if she drank blood, but the heads were probably not going to allow the chance. Unless the number of heads could be halved, she couldn’t use her best spells.

The yellow head was taking all their attacks. But soon it was showing signs of damage in its previously flawless head.

“Kuruan!”

Its white head heals the yellow head at once. The head performed its healer role perfectly. However, at that moment the incendiary grenade exploded over the white head. Tar at 3000 degree centigrade was scattered around. When it poured onto the white head, it screamed in pain.

Don’t miss this chance! Hajime sent this message telepathically. They planned for a simultaneous attack. Before they could execute, a scream sounded. Yue’s scream.

“Noooo!!”

“!? Yue!”

He quickly tried to rush over to her, but was intercepted by wind blades and fireballs fired by the green head and red head respectively. Yue was still screaming, Hajime wondered what was going on with his teeth clenched. The black head, he realized it had done nothing this whole time.

(No that’s wrong, it had already done something.)

Hajime fired Donner at the black head, while he dodged around with “Flicker” and “Air Walk”. With the sound of firearm, the black head that was staring at Yue was blown away. Yue collapsed at the same time. He could see that her face was pale even from a distance. The blue head opened its big mouth and stretched its head towards Yue to swallow her.

“Like I’ll let you!!”

Hajime prepared himself to get damaged in the storm of wind blades and fireballs as he used his “Flicker”. A potentially fatal attack was avoided with the use of Donner and “Air Claws”. At the last moment, Hajime arrived between the blue head and Yue. But there was no time to counter, so he quickly triggered “Vajra”. Hajime could not use this skill while moving. That is why he stood before Yue to block that attack. The magic covered his body at the same time the head bit him.

“Kururu!”

“Guu!”

While raising a low growl, the blue head swallowed Hajime whole. When it tried to close its jaws, Hajime leaned forward and braced his legs to prevent it from closing. He pushed Donner against the head's upper jaw and pulled the trigger.

The blue head erupted from the blast and bits of its brain flew off. Hajime used his "Grand Kick" on the motionless head. Then he threw a flash grenade and sonic grenade at the Hydra.

"Sonic Grenade" was developed from a demon that could emit ultrasonic waves that they met on the 80th level. The demon had a special organ inside its body that generated these sounds to attack. Hajime did not get any special magic for defeating this monster, but he was able to use its special organ as materials for his new grenade.

Those two grenades covered the Hydra in intense light and ultrasonic waves. Hajime carried Yue and hid behind the pillars with the chance those grenades provided.

"Hey! Yue! Get it together!"

"…"

She didn't react to his words with her paling expression and trembling body. What the heck did the black head do to her? While he cursed, he slapped Yue's cheeks. Hajime called out for her telepathically and gave her some sacred water. After a while, light began to dwell in her hollow eyes.

"Yue!"

"…Hajime"

"Yeah, its me. Are you alright? What happened?"

Yue confirmed Hajime's existence with blinking eyes. She extends out her small hands and touched his face. A relieved sigh escaped her lips as she realized that Hajime was really in front of her, and tears began to collect at the edge of her eyes.

"…What a relief…I thought I was abandoned…alone in the dark again…"

"Ah? What are you talking about?"

Hajime was perplexed at her state. Yue said she saw a scene play out where Hajime had abandoned her and resealed her. When she saw that, a strong sense of insecurity struck her. She became bound by fear then it paralyzed her body and mind.

"Tsk! A debuff spell? Seems like the black head can induce panic into its opponent. Shit, that monster has a good balance of skills!"

"…Hajime."

Yue watched Hajime curse at the troublesome enemy with her anxious eyes. It was a frightening scene. Being abandoned by Hajime. He was the person to risk his own life at unsealing her after 300 years. He who didn't treat her differently after she told him she was a

vampire, and allow her to fed off of him day-by-day. It was unavoidable that her heart yielded.

The only place for Yue was besides Hajime. How nice it was when they promised to return to Hajime's hometown together. She didn't even want to imagine being alone again. Therefore the planted nightmare was stuck in her head and ate her up. Hajime stands up at the sign of the Hydra recovering from the confusion. Yue detained him involuntarily when she grabbed his clothes.

"…I…"

She was shaking with an uneasy expression that was close to crying. Hajime finally understood what nightmare she saw and what she was currently thinking. In his usual manner, he was able to perceive her feelings. Either way, he had promised to take her to Japan. There was no reason to pretend not to know.

He would probably be able to comfort her with words, but there was no time for that. If he said some half-hearted words, she would still fall prey to the black head's magic. There was a possibility that Hajime would mess up, but at that time he will follow Yue. While he thought of that excuse, Hajime scratched his head and squatted in front of Yue to meet her eyes.

And then…

"?…!?"

Hajime inclined his head and kissed Yue.

Their lips only touched a bit, but Yue had a dramatic reaction. She just seriously stared at Hajime.

He diverted his eyes bashfully, and led her to stand with his hand.

"We will kill that beast and survive. Then, we will reach the surface and return home…together."

Yue started at Hajime in utter amazement, then her usual deadpan expression broke down to gently display a beautiful smile.

"Yes!"

Hajime cleared his throat to gather himself and informed Yue of the strategy.

"Yue, I'm going to use the Schlagen. It can't fire continuously, so please cover me."

"…Leave it to me!"

Yue is suddenly full of motivation. Her quiet mutters were gone, and in place was a voice full of ambition. All the anxiety before vanished completely.

It seems like there had been a breakthrough in various ways. Hajime recalled his usual lack of independence, he thinks about the future, maybe he acted rashly. However, the Hydra performed an explosion. The beast roared as it pelleted the area Hajime and Yue were at with fireballs, wind blades, and ice shards.

Two people jumped out of the shadow of the pillar and started their counterattack.

“”Scarlet Spear”! “Imperial Cannon”! “Frozen Rain”!”

The trigger for the magic was activated rapidly. Magic built up at an impossible speed, an ice tornado accompanied a spiralling spear with vacuum blades whirling around it and a sharp needle attacks the Hydra all at once. She had aimed for the gap when they attacked and launched it towards the red, green, and blue head to force the yellow head to act. But it didn’t move as the yellow head noticed Hajime aiming for the white head, it raised a roar.

“Kuruuan!”

Then a nearby pillar waved and it transformed into an impromptu shield. This yellow head seems to be able to use a skill similar to the scorpion’s, though the scale was smaller.

Yue’s magic hit the stone walls, it blasted through the vanguard of walls. The magic directly hit three of the heads.

“””Guruuuu!!”””

Three of the heads screamed and wriggled. When the black head’s eyes caught Yue’s it started to use its debuff magic.

Uneasiness wells up in Yue again. However, Yue remembers her kiss with Hajime before she is crushed by the uneasiness. Then, her body got a passionate feeling and it washed away her anxiety.

“…It doesn’t work anymore!”

In order to cover Hajime, Yue was casting spells rapidly and was emphasizing the number of spells rather than the power of them.

The red head that received healing, blue head, and green head resumed their attacks, and Yue contended with them by herself. They tried to counter each other.

While the three heads were occupied with Yue, Hajime approached the beast with a dash. He was going for a single killing blow, because it would be troublesome if the beast had emergency measures it had yet to use. When the black head realized its magic didn’t work on Yue, it looked for Hajime. The pain, hunger, and anxiety of his time in the abyss rose inside his chest. But…

“So what?”

It was the pasted that he endured a long time ago. Feeling those days were not a big deal now. Hajime blew away the black head with Donner.

The white head tried to recover the head in a split second, but before it could Hajime jumped into the air using his skills and aimed his Schlagen.

Just as he had assumed, the yellow had stood in the way of the shot for the white head.

“Then break together!”

Hajime creates a spark in the Schlagen with his “Lightning Clad”. The bullet was a full metal jacket, the Tauru ore being covered by the Stall ore from the scorpion. Stall ore had a high affinity to magic and it suited “Lightning Clad” well. All the compressed combustion powder was ignited with the spark.

Bang!!

The red bullet was electromagnetically accelerated through the 1.5 m barrel with a tremendous explosive sound. This gun was 10 times more powerful than Donner’s maximum output. With his simple calculation, this rifle was 100 times more powerful than a normal anti-matter rifle. A monster weapon that was not possible without this world’s special ore and magic.

When it was fired, the bullet made a red trail like it was a thick laser. Once, they thought Kouki’s spell that was shot at the Behemoth was the trump card, but this made that look like child’s play. Yellow head met the bullet directly as it burned through the air.

Although the yellow head had a defense like “Vajra”…but the bullet reached the white head like there was nothing there. The bullet penetrated through everything like nothing as it blasted through the wall in the rear. Vibrations violently wracked the whole level as if an earthquake had happened.

What was left was two necks that looked like two heads had not even existed there. The open wound had been cauterized by the heat and made it seem like it never had those two heads. Debris was littered everywhere, and no one knew how long that bullet kept going only that it left a huge hole in the wall.

The other heads did not think that almost half of its heads could be extinguished in a single moment. Even Yue was staring at Hajime in utter amazement and had forgotten her enemy. Hajime landed flat on the ground, There was smoke rising out of Schlagen’s as the round was ejected. When the shell it the floor, the three heads regained its senses. All three pair of eyes glared at Hajime, but their previous opponent was not someone to take their eyes off of.

“”Scorching Heaven”!”

Once the Vampire Princess. The existence that caused fear into her own people because of her talents, and caused them to seal her. Power pours into the spell and it was like Heaven’s vengeance was being turned against it.

Immediately after, electric discharge started to gather around the 3 heads and soon 6 lightning spheres surround the heads. Soon the electric discharge lengthened and connected all the spheres together, and created a huge lightning globe in the center.

Zugagagagaga!!

When the globe burst, it rained down lightning of great power within the the limits of the 6 smaller spheres. The three heads tried to run, but the surrounding lightning spheres were acting like walls. As the wrath of God poured down from the sky, flashes and thunder filled the room.

Helpless, the three heads screamed in agony as it was charcoaled and erased by the superlative magic that lasted more than 10 seconds.

Like always, Yue collapsed into a sitting position after using that strong of a spell. She was breathing heavily at her magical exhaustion and in her expressionless face was her eyes that conveyed satisfaction; she gave Hajime a thumbs up to show her satisfaction. Hajime returned the gesture with his own thumbs up and smiled. He began to walk while he carried the rifle on his shoulder. The remaining parts of the Hydra was to the rear of him now that he made his way to Yue.

Just after that.

“Hajime!”

Yue’s desperate voice sounded out. When he considered what was up, he followed her line of sight. There in the Hydra’s remains rose a seventh head that glared at him. Hajime stiffens unintentionally.

However, the seventh silver head, shifted its gaze to Yue and it let loose an aurora without any preparations. Like the Schlagen shot, the aurora shot towards Yue in an instant. She couldn’t move because of magic exhaustion.

The moment the silver head turned to Yue, Hajime had jumped out as his body was attacked by chills.

Just like with the blue head earlier, Hajime was able to jump into the line of fire to save Yue. This time the results were different. The aurora was swallowing Hajime whole. Yue’s body was blown away by the aftereffect of the hit, even if it wasn’t a direct hit.

Soon the aurora calmed down, and Yue sat herself up as her whole body was in pain. She searched for the figure of Hajime, as he had been swallowed by the aurora after he forced his way through to take the attack.

Hajime had not moved from the place he blocked the attack. He was in an imposing stance as smoke blew from his whole body. On the floor was the wreckage of the melted Schlagen.

“H-Hajime?”

“…”

He did not answer. His body just shook and fell forward.

“Hajime!”

Yue quickly rushed over to him, ignoring her aching body as she is driven by uneasiness. Because of her magic drain, she couldn't gather any strength and fell. With a suppressed impatient feeling, she took out her sacred water and drank. Her vitality returned slowly and she rushed to Hajime this time.

Blood gradually begins to puddle under Hajime's stomach. The attack had penetrated Hajime's "Vajra" and did a lot of damage. If he had not used the Schlagen as a shield, he most likely would have died. Luckily, his Schlagen was a weapon made from the shell of the scorpion that endured Yue's "Azure Sky".

When she turned him on his back, Hajime's condition was severe. His fingers, shoulder, and flank was burned and festering. Some of the parts even had bone exposed. The right side of his face was burned and his right eye was bleeding. There was not much damage to his legs, it was a blessing in disguise.

Yue was going to give him sacred water, but the Hydra wasn't going to allow that. The beast was shooting innumerable balls of light, 10 cm in diameter, this time. Its intensity could be comparable to a gatling gun.

She quickly held Hajime and exerted all her strength to hide behind the pillars. Balls of light was shot one after another at the pillars, and causing the pillars to be shaved. It would not last even 1 more minute. Each of the light ball was loaded with terrifying energy.

Yue quickly dropped the sacred water into Hajime's wound, and tried to get him to drink another one. However, Hajime didn't have the power to swallow it, so he choked on it and spit some out. To get Hajime to drink it, Yue placed it in her mouth and kissed him. She forcibly made him drink it.

But the sacred water was not able to restore the wounds. Usually, the restoration began immediately, it seems like something was inhibiting it.

"Why!?"

Yue took out all the sacred water on hand as she began to panic.

The factor that was inhibiting the restoration was Hydra's poison in the aurora; the poison melt the flesh. It usually would have melted a being without resistance. However, the sacred water's restoration was faster than the dissolution speed of the poison. The speed was slow but with Hajime's enhanced body it would just take time to heal, but the right eye had evaporated with the auroral light. He would not be able to get it back because the sacred water could only restore, not regenerate.

Soon the pillar will be crushed, and it did not seem Hajime will be able to move until then. Yue stares at Hajime with a determined expression as she kissed him. She took Donner and stood up.

"…This time, I'll save you…"

After her words of determination, she jumped out from behind the pillar. She only had a little magic and the sacred water was used up. With the body of a vampire that relied on body strengthening, she could only use Donner and her unreliable “Auto Regen”.

The silver head glares at the Yue that had jumped out of the pillar it was bombarding. Since her magic reserve was low, she did not choose to fight it with magic. Instead she chose to dodging and run because she couldn’t fire Donner like Hajime. Originally, Yue was not good with close quarter combat. Instantly she was driven into a corner.

Finally, one of the balls hit Yue in the shoulder.

“Agu!”

Groaning in pain, she endured it and resumed her running after retaining her momentum. The moment she stopped because of the pain, would be the time she collapsed. Her “Auto Regen” began, but it was slower than usual. Seems the poison was even effective against her regen. The vampiress’ magic reverse is cut again. In this situation, the magical power used to enforce her body will disappear soon.

Yue tried to approach it but the density of the barrage prevents her. She wouldn’t be able to shoot Donner if she couldn’t get closer. A plan was needed to close the distance between her and the beast. However, the barrage was merciless and it finally cornered her.

In desperation, she pulled Donner’s trigger to try to break the situation. Yue used a lightning spell to substitute the need for “Lightning Clad” acceleration. Count it as beginner’s luck, the bullet went through the gaps of the barrage to hit the silver head’s temple.

But,

“Eh”

Her voice leaked unintentionally. The blow should have some power even if she didn’t have sufficient acceleration, but the silver head did not suffer much damage. Shadows of despair fell over her expression, but her defeat meant Hajime’s death. She grit her teeth and prepared to evade again.

However, such a pattern couldn’t continue on forever. The silver head’s eyes shined and another aurora was shot that jarred the surrounding space. Yue’s evasion route was limited by the light ball barrage so she choose to get blown away by jumping into the light bullets. This allowed her to avoid the aurora.

The price for that was a light bullet to the abdomen and a slam into the ground.

“Uu…Uu…”

Her body couldn’t move. If she didn’t move, a barrage of light bullets was going to hit her. Yue knew this and struggled desperately, but her body doesn’t listen. Her regeneration was too slow. She started to shed tears, unawared. It was mortifying, so unavoidably mortifying. Can she not protect Hajime by herself?

After the head had confirmed its victory over Yue, it roared and shot its bullets of light.

The bullets of light approached Yue, but she did not close her eyes. To show that at least it hadn't defeated her heart, she glared at the head. Soon, her whole vision was being taken by the flash from the bullet. If it hit directly, it was death. She tried to apologize to Hajime for failing to protect him, as she said that she would go first.

An instant…a gust of wind blew.

"Eh?"

Yue realized that she was in someone's arms and the bullet stuck to the side. When she looked at the person, she couldn't believe her sight. It was unmistakably Hajime. He was breathing heavily from his wounds and one of his eyes was shut, but he gave Yue a tight hug.

"Don't cry, Yue. It's your win."

"Hajime!"

She embraced Hajime filled with emotions. Most of his injuries had not healed. He was standing with pure willpower.

Hajime gazed at the silver head. The head glared back while making a bullet of light float in the surrounding. It threw the bullet so there would be no more discussion about who escaped death.

"So slow…"

Hajime did not move until the last moment, he fell down and evaded the bullet.

The head narrow its eyes and started to attack with numerous light balls.

"Hajime, run away!"

Yue told Hajime with a desperate expression, but Hajime was indifferent. He even embraced and danced rotations with Yue. They unsteady fell and avoided the bullets of light. When a light ball avoided Hajime, she seemed to have misunderstood.

She widen her eyes.

"Yue, suck my blood."

His silent eye and quiet voice urged her. Even normally, she hesitated to take his blood. While dodging the light bullets, Hajime embraced Yue and exposed his nape.

"Your magic is the last resort…Do it, Yue. We will win."

"…Okay!"

His strong words dwell within her, and she nodded. She believed in him and buried her face into his nape with her fangs. Yue's body is rapidly healed when Hajime's power flowed into her. The two of them were dancing around and avoiding the light bullet storm, while they embraced each other.

Now, the world grew dull in color from his view. In the world of the monochrome, all things moved slowly. Only Hajime was moving as usual.

Hajime looked. The scene of Yue fighting by herself while his wavering consciousness tried to hold on. She was fighting desperately with his gun in one of her hands. When she fell on the ground and the beast started to emit the aurora to finish her off.

Fierce anger filled Hajime. What does he have to do? Would he be satisfied just sleeping here? To permit such unreasonableness to take his partner in such a place? Was he going to yield to such a beast?

Nay! Absolutely not! An enemy threatening his, no, their survival! The enemy,

"Kill!"

At that moment, Hajime felt a spark run through his head and awaken one of his skills. The final derivation of "Divine Step", [Light Speed]. By expanding the cognitive functions, it increased the efficiency of all the skill associated with "Divine Step" dramatically. Hajime has once again, "exceeded the wall".

Hajime arrives next to Yue in an instant with this skill and gently dodged the bullets of light.

Eventually, Yue finished sucking his blood and completely regained her powers.

"Yue, when I give the signal, cast "Azure Sky". Until then, put your heart and soul into evading.

"Okay…and Hajime?"

"Me, spadework."

Hajime dropped Yue off behind the pillars and ran towards the silver head.

He dodges the incoming barrage of light and fires off Donner while using "Flicker". The beast wasn't able to stomach being hit again by the bullet so it dodged them. Bullets from Donner end up making holes in the ceiling.

Hajime kept changing the area he shot at, but all the bullets only made holes in the surroundings. A sneerful glint was in the silver head's eyes. Yue was becoming uneasy but she believed in him. She waited for the signal to cast her spell.

He jumped into the air with "Air Walk" and fired off Donner. His delicate steps became possible which had not been possible in the match. Hajime jumped around in the air near the ceiling, dodging the barrage.

Irritated, the silver head gave off an aurora attack carelessly. Naturally, Hajime dodged it easily with a grin. Hajime had fathomed. The head became stiff while it did its aurora attack. Then he reloaded Donner and shot at 6 different places. An intense explosion and shock occurred on the ceiling. After an instant of silence, it began to collapse in one go. The debris was 10 m in diameter and weighed dozens of tons. That large mass crushed into the silver head.

Hajime opens a hole in the ceiling with Donner, and prepared a grenade while he evaded. He made parts of the ceiling fragile with his transmutation. Then he shot at the 6 places and it exploded.

His attack did not slack. If just simple debris could defeat this monster, he wouldn't have that much trouble. Hajime approached the trapped and crushed silver head with "Flicker". Using his transmutation, Hajime quickly changed the debris into restraints. At the same time, he created an impromptu blast furnace around the Hydra. He threw pouches containing incendiary grenades into the furnace and shouted.

"Yue!"

"Okay! "Azure Sky"!"

A pale sun appears in the blast furnace and melts the silver head that was restrained. There was a chain explosion inside, the power broke through its defense and the silver head suffered not negligible damage.

"Guuruaaa!!"

The death throes of the silver head. It tried to violently run away and shoots off the light bullets randomly. Walls started to break but Hajime was there to repair them to prevent its escape. Hydra tried to use its aurora attack but the silver head melted in the high heat and was unable to shoot it.

Hajime's perception could not longer sense the hydra, as it disappeared from his senses. This time he was convinced of its death and collapsed backwards.

"Hajime!"

Yue crawled to him as her body had lost the ability to gather energy.

"Indeed…I'm spent…"

Hajime parted from consciousness slowly as he felt Yue embracing him.

Back to top

Chapter 2 : Abode of Traitors

Hajime felt his whole body being wrapped by something warm and soft. It was a very nostalgic feeling. This is the feeling of a bed. A cushion was gently catching his head and back. The softness of feathers wrapped his body. His dozing consciousness was thrown into confusion.

(What is this? This is supposed to be the dungeon…Why is a bed…)

He was fumbling around as his consciousness was not fully awake yet. However, he couldn't move his right hand. It was wrapped in a soft feeling that was different from the bed. His palm was also wedged into something warm and soft.

(What's this?)

Hajime moves his hand while he was still blank. He felt a certain elasticity between his hands and it was squishy when he touched it. Just keen on the feel somehow and it becomes a habit to keep touching…

"…Ahn.."

(!?)

For some reason a seductive gasp could be heard. At that moment, the first visage of his consciousness came back to him.

Hajime noticed as he raised himself in panic, that he really was in a bed. The bed had a pure-white sheet and it felt luxurious and it even had a canopy. It seems the bed was on a stone pavement in a terrace atrium. A refreshing breeze blew by Hajime's cheeks and the canopy. His perimeter was surrounded by pillars and a thin curtain. Can you imagine a bed in the center of a Parthenon shrine? The whole space was filled with a warm light that he hasn't seen in a long time.

He was confused, just a while ago he was in a desperate struggle fighting against the Hydra in the dungeon.

(Where is this? This place…don't tell me its the afterworld…)

In this place that felt so solemn, an ominous thought crossed his mind. Hajime thoughts were interrupted by an amorous voice next to him.

"…Hn…Hajime…Au…"

"!?"

When Hajime was confused, he turned over the sheet. While not wearing a single thread of clothing, Yue clinged onto Hajime's right hand and slept completely naked. He finally noticed that even he was naked.

"Indeed…is this the morning chirp…that's not right!"

The confused Hajime did a Tsukkomi on himself for his stupid thoughts. Yue started to wake up a little.

“Yue, wake up. Yue.”

“Hn~…”

When he tried to wake her up, she curled up and shook her head to fret. His right hands were between Yue’s thighs and it was approaching a dangerous place.

“Ku…Don’t tell me this is really the afterworld…is it Heaven?”

Hajime he was saying those stupid things, he tried to free his right hand, but everytime…

“…Hn…Hn…”

Yue panted seductively.

“Ku, calm down me. No matter how old she is, her appearance is still of a child. Impossible for me to get excited! I am absolutely not a lolicon!”

Hajime tried to persuade himself of this, while his expression was on the brink of looking like a pervert. He gave up trying to free his right hand, and instead tried to wake up the cause but no luck.

Gradually, he started to get irritated. Hajime could not swallow the situation and confusion, and he had a blue vein popping out on his forehead at her leisurely sleeping there.

His irritation culminated…

“That’s enough, get up! This natural erotic vampire princess!”

He invoked his “Lightning Clad”. Electric discharge started to gather in his right hand.

“!? Abababababababa”

Yue was shocked by the discharge. She released Hajime’s arm and finally opened her eyes, while she twitched a little.

“…Hajime?”

“Yeah. It’s Hajime-san. Sleepyhead, wake up…”

“Hajime!”

“!?”

She woke up and widened her eyes when she saw Hajime. The next moment, she jumped towards Hajime. In the nude. Hajime trembled.

Yue buried her face into Hajime's scruff. and he noticed she was sniffing. He decided there was no helping it, and just stroke her head with a smile.

"My bad, seems like I worried you a lot."

"Yeah…I was worried…"

It seems she didn't want to stop clinging for a while. He let her do it until she was satisfied because she did take care of him. Hajime continued to stroke her head gently.

When Yue calmed down after a few minutes, Hajime asked about what happened. By the way, he made Yue cover herself with the sheet.

"So, what happened since then? Where is this?"

"…After that…"

She said that after the battle, she felt dizzy from her magic depletion and snuggle right next to the collapsed Hajime. Then the double doors in the room automatically opened. Reinforcements? Yue stayed vigilant but nothing ever came. When she started to recover bit by bit, she decided to enter the door.

The sacred water was healing Hajime little by little. Still, he was in a dangerous state with all his serious injuries. His tough body had escaped death, but she didn't know when the sacred water would lose to the poison. Both of them would be finished if a new monster appeared. Therefore, she had to check it out.

And in the depths of the door,

"…Abode of the Traitors."

Inside was a vast space with a good looking house in the center. Then, she confirmed it wasn't dangerous. Yue confirmed there was a bedroom and took the unconscious Hajime to it and nursed him. Recently, the God's Crystal extract was decreasing considerably. Hajime had kept drinking the sacred water.

The sacred water finally beat out the toxins, and it was able to display its usual restorative prowess. Yue became exhausted eventually.

"…I see, you took care of me. Thanks, Yue."

"Hn!"

When Hajime conveyed his words of thanks, Yue's eyes brighten up joyfully from the bottom of her heart. She was expressionless but her eyes said all.

"By the way…why am I naked?"

He was curious. The morning chirp he wanted to break from. Hajime didn't dislike Yue…he just wanted to prepare his heart. Inwardly, he just muttered to himself.

"…You were dirty…I cleaned you…"

"…Why did you lick your lips?"

Yue had a bewitching smile, like when she sucked his blood, and licked her lips. For some reason his body shivered.

"Why was Yue sleeping next to me? Also…naked…"

"…Fufu…"

"Wait, what are you laughing at? Did you do something? Don't lick your lips!"

While Hajime was questioning her intensely, Yue did not answered and just stared at Hajime with a voluptuous look.

Hajime questioned for a while, but she had a happy expression as she remained quiet. He decided to give up on the questioning and explore the abode. Yue handed him some high-quality clothes she found. It was men's clothing. Most likely it was the traitor's. Hajime confirmed his good health then dressed himself with the clothes, and prepared his equipment. There might be some traps or tricks, so he prepared himself just in case.

When his preparation was also complete, he looked back and found Yue dressed. Yue was,

…she was in a one piece cutter shirt.

"Yue..what are you aiming for?"

"?…Size doesn't fit."

Oh, men's size would surely not fit Yue's height of only 140 cm. However, her appropriate sized breasts and pure white legs were on display. Her image was so sensational, contrary to her childish appearance, because of the way Yue held herself and acted. Hajime was troubled on where to keep his eyes.

"…If its natural, then its quite frightening…"

He wasn't sure if she was aiming for that or it just came natural. Hajime just knew she was terrifying in a variety of ways.

Leaving the bedroom, he was amazed at the sights around him.

First, sunlight had entered his eye. It wasn't real because they were underground. There was a globe that had its cone-shaped body connected to the ceiling, and it was floating there shining. He felt slightly warm because it didn't feel artificial like a fluorescent lights. Hajime unintentionally called it "Sun".

"…It becomes like a moon when its night."

"Seriously…"

Next, the pleasing sounds of water entered his ears. To the back of the room was a door that lead to a small sized stadium. In the back wall of this room was a waterfall. A large quantity of water ran down that wall from the ceiling and joined the river to flow into the back cave. The cool wind full of negative ions that blew from the waterfall provided a good feeling. When he took a closer look at the water, there were fish swimming there. Possible the fish flowed in from a terrestrial river.

Some distance from the river, there was a big field. Nothing seems to be planted there right now…it spread throughout the surrounding. It could be an animal pen. There was no sign of animals, but there was resources here to be self sufficient. Lots of varieties of plants grew around here too.

Hajime was on the opposite side of the river and field. He was encouraged to walk towards the adjacent building to the bedroom. The construction felt like processed rocked and it wasn't for dwelling.

"…I checked around a bit, there were many rooms that didn't open.."

"I see…Yue, don't let your guard down."

"Okay…"

The stone house was white and it texture was like lime; All of it felt so clean. In the entrance, there was a light sphere that was at the tip of a pedestal projecting from the ceiling. Hajime was dazzled with it because he had been in the dark for so long. There seemed to be 3 stories, and there seemed to be an atrium at the top.

First, they wanted to look at the ground floor. They discovered a fireplace, soft carpet, living area with a sofa, a kitchen, and restroom. No signs pointed to the idea that these items had been neglected for years. There was no sign of life…but it had the feeling of return home after a trip. Hajime thought it had an air that told him it hadn't been used in a while. People did not live here, but it was still being maintained…

Hajime and Yue continued their exploration with caution. When they went into the interior they were outdoors again. There was a hole in this huge place, and a sculpture of a lion was enshrined in deep water there. Next to the sculpture was a magic formation. When he poured magic into the formation, warm water jumped out of the lion's open mouth. The lion seemed to be able to arrange water from anywhere in the world.

"A bath. This is good. How many months has it been since I had a bath?"

He loosens his cheeks instinctively. The first time around, Hajime did not care about the dirt that was on his body. Since he was worried about itching, he gave in. Water was gathered using a huge magic formation he craved and he wiped his body with the water.

However, Hajime was Japanese. He was no exception to the addiction for a bath. After he secured the area, he couldn't help himself from smiling.

Watching that Hajime, Yue said…

"…Enter? Together…"

"…Let me take it easy alone."

"Mu…"

Yue kicked the warm water with her barefeet. Hajime refused because if they entered together he wouldn't be able to relax. Her face showed how dissatisfied she was.

Both of them soon discovered a study room and workshop on the second floor. However, there seemed to be seals that prevent the opening of the doors in those rooms. With no other choice, they continued their search.

The two headed to the third floor's back room. There was only one room on the third floor. When they opened the door into the interior, there was a 7-8 m wide exquisite and delicate magic formation engraved on the floor in the center of the room; the design was something they had never seen before. A rather splendid geometrical patterned formation and it looked like art.

However, something else was more noteworthy. On the other side of the magic formation was a figure sitting in a regal chair. The figure was a corpse. It was already been skeletonized and there was a stunning black robe embroidered with gold on its body. There was not a single stain on it and it seemed to be an object from a haunted house.

The corpse hung its head, while leaning on the chair. It had been decayed in that posture. What did this person think of in this room with only a magic formation? Why did it choose this place, instead of the bedroom or living room?

"…Suspicious…What do you want to do?"

Yue was also wondering about the corpse. This person was probably one of the traitors. No signs of suffering could be seen on the figure that rested on the chair. It seemed like the figure was waiting for someone.

"Well, if we want to reach the surface, I think this room is the key. The seals in the library and studio resisted my transmutation…so we have to investigate. Yue wait here, and if anything happens I'll leave it to you."

"Okay…Be careful."

Hajime stepped forward towards the magic formation. The moment he stepped into the center of the magic formation, a snow-white light flashes suddenly and the room is dyed with the light.

Due to the intensity, Hajime closed his eye. Something invaded into his head immediately after, and he went through the time he fell into the abyss like a revolving lantern.

The light soon settled and Hajime opened his eyes; in front of his eyes…was a young man in black clothing.

Back to top

Chapter 3 : True History

The magic formation shines faintly and fills the room with a mysterious light.

A young man was standing in front of Hajime, and if they looked closely the man was wearing the same robe as the corpse on the chair.

“You have arrived here after overcoming the trials. My name is Oscar Orcus. The person who created this dungeon. If I said one of the Traitors, would you understand?”

Seems like the person speaking was Oscar Orcus. The creator of the “Orcus Dungeon”. Hajime was surprised but kept listening.

“Ah, please don’t ask questions. This is just a recording, unfortunately, it wouldn’t be able to answer your questions. For the person to reach this place, I will impart the truth of the world and what we fought for…this is the leftover message. I took this shape. Please I want you to listen…We are traitors but we are also not.”

Then Orcus started his story. This story was much different from the known history that the church taught and what Yue explained to him; it shocked him.

A tale of the battle between the Mad God and his descendants.

During the first years after the Age of Gods, the world was filled with strife. Humans, Devils, and Demi-Humans were constantly at war with each other. The reason for their wars varies. Territorial expansion, ethnic values, greed, and much others. The biggest reason was “Enemy of God”. During that time the races and countries were finely divided. Each of the race and country would worship their own god. For their god’s oracle, they continued to wage their war.

After hundreds of years of countless battles, but there came people who wanted to end this war. The group was called “Liberators” during those days.

They all had a common connection. All of them were direct descendants of the gods that were followed in the Age of Gods. The leader of the “Liberators” had, by chance, found out the real intentions of the gods. The gods had urged the wars with the intention of having the people be the pieces in their war game. When he found this out, the leader set out on a mission. He gathered like minded people who would not stand for the gods manipulating the people and driving them to war for their games.

They located the place where the gods resided, “World of God”. There were 8 of them that had the strength of ancestral times in “Liberators”, and with their powerful strength challenged the gods.

However, the plan fails before the fighting began. The gods were the puppet masters of the people, and they had gotten people to recognize the “Liberators” as the enemy of god that wanted to bring destruction to the world. People were made to be their enemies. There were complications in the process, after all, they couldn’t wield their power against the people they were trying to protect. When the “Liberators” were defeated they were labeled as “Traitors”, the traitors who forgot the grace of god and wanted to destroy the world.

At the end, their group had been dwindled to the 8 strongest. They were now the world’s enemies and they judged that they were not strong enough to strike down the gods. Each of them scattered around the continent and created the 8 Great Dungeon to hide in. The dungeon was a trial to find a worthy person to hand over their powers, and with it accomplish what they could not.

Orcus smiles gently after he finished that long story.

“I don’t know who you are or what reason you arrived here for. I will not coerce you into killing God. However, I wanted you to know. What we stood for.

…To you, I grant my powers. You are free to use it as you will.

Please do not use this power to satisfy the evil in your heart.

Our conversation is at an end. Thank you for listening. Now your free will won’t be under supervision.”

After he finished what he said, the recorded image of Orcus disappeared. Something invaded Hajime’s mind at the same time. His mind ached with a throb, but endured it quietly because it imprinted knowledge of a certain magic.

Soon, both the pain and magic formation settled. Hajime slowly exhaled.

“Hajime…are you okay?”

“Ah, I’m fine…kind of. I just heard something immense.”

“…Okay…What do you want to do?”

Yue asked what he wanted to do, after he heard Orcus’ story.

“Yeah? Nothing in particular? Being summoned without permission and asking them to fight a war was bothersome. I don’t even know what’s going on with this world. Looking for a way to the surface and going home. That’s my only goal…Are you bothered by it, Yue?”

The previous Hajime would probably do something. However, his values had changed and it allowed him to ignore Orcus’ plight. This world should have its own people deal with their problems, but Yue was as resident of this world. Since he couldn’t leave her alone, he had to consider what she wanted. He couldn’t cut off Yue like he did Orcus because their relationship was a lot closer. Hajime asked her for her thought, but after a slight hesitation she shook her head.

“My place is here…others I don’t care.”

She snuggled up to Hajime and took his hand. Yue tried to convey her true feelings as she grasped his hand. In the past, she devoted everything for her country. Betrayed by those she trusted and not a single person saved her. For Yue after her long imprisonment, this world was just a prison to her.

Hajime was the one to save her from her prison. That is why being beside Hajime was her everything.

“…Is that so.”

Hajime was slightly embarrassed. He cleared his throat to disguise it, and tells the shocking truth without hesitation.

“Ah, I also learned some new magic…Age of Gods magic it seems.”

“…Really?”

Yue had an expression that said she didn’t believe him, but it was expected. The magic used in the Age of Gods were lost to the modern world. It was transition magic that summoned him and the others here, and that was an Age of Gods magic.

“This magic formation on the floor can fiddle with your brain and teach you to use it. It seems like.”

“…Are you okay?”

“Yeah, no problem. This magic…seems like its the magic for me.”

“…What kind of magic?”

“Well, I think its called Creation Magic. You can add magic into minerals with it, and the added magic can give special properties to the minerals.”

Yue jaw-dropped at Hajime’s explanation.

“…You can make artifacts.”

“Ah, I can do that.”

Creation Magic was used to create artifacts during the Age of Gods. Like this magic was made for “Transmutation Master”. The truth was Orcus’ class was “Transmutation Master”.

“Why don’t you learn, Yue? Entering this magic square and it will explore your memories. Orcus said something about a trial and you may learn it if it judges that you passed the trial.”

“…I don’t use transmutation…”

“Mah, that’s true but…its magic from ancient times? It wouldn’t hurt to learn it?”

"…Okay…if Hajime says so."

Yue walks to the center of the magic formation just like Hajime advised. The magic formation shines as it searches through Yue's memories. Now the moment of truth of its verdict…

"You have arrived here after overcoming the trials. My name is Oscar…"

Orcus appeared again. There was a spoiled feeling. Hajime and Yue ignored Orcus' story and kept talking to each other.

"Did you learn it?"

"Yeah. But…artifact is difficult."

"Yeah, it seems that Ancient Magic might have affinities and suitability."

While the two were talking with each other, near them was Orcus talking and smiling to nothing. It was very surreal. Hajime thought he saw the corpse look sad, but wrote it off as his imagination.

"Ah, for the time being, this place is ours now, do you want to tidy up the corpse."

Hajime did not have any compassion.

"Un…fertilize the field…"

Yue also did not have any compassion.

Even though there was no wind, Orcus' body hung its head.

Orcus' body was buried at the end of the field, and a gravestone was erected there. As expected, treating him like fertilizer was too pitiful.

When they finished with the burial, Hajime and Yue went to the sealed rooms. They had received a ring that Orcus had worn. Don't call them grave robbers. On the ring was an engraved pattern that was crosswise in the circle, and the pattern was the same as the seals in the library and studio.

First, they headed to the study.

Their first purpose was to search for a way to the surface. Hajime and Yue unlocked the seal on the bookshelf and checked it for anything notable. They discovered the designs for the whole dwelling. Although it wasn't to the degree of a blueprint, where what went, it was a memo of where certain buildings would be placed.

"Bingo! It has it, Yue!"

"Un"

A voice of delight escapes from Hajime. Yue is also joyful. According to the plan, the magic formation on the third floor was also connected somehow to a formation on the surface. The magic would not activate without Orcus' ring. Stea…Accepting that ring was a good idea.

When they examined the plan more, there was an independent golem in the studio that maintained this dwelling periodically. The light from the globes on the ceiling had the same property as natural sunlight. This meant that crops and other things that rely on sunlight could be grown. It seems the reason this place felt so clean, even when no life was here, was because of the golem.

The studio acted as a storage for all the artifacts and materials Orcus had made during his lifetime. These items were stole…transferred to them. There were quite a lot of devices.

"Hajime…this."

"Yeah?"

Yue had been investigating the other documents while Hajime checked the plans, and brought him one of the books. The book was Orcus' memoir. Inside the memoirs were the written the daily lives of former comrades, especially about the 8 core members of the "Liberators".

Within the passages, one of them was related with the Dungeons the other 7 made.

"…In other words, its that? If we conquer the other dungeons, we would obtain the creator's Ancient magic?"

"…Maybe."

According to the memoirs, just like Orcus, the other 7 "Liberators" were prepared to teach their Ancient Magic to those that conquer their dungeon and reach the final floor. Unfortunately the types of magic was not written…

"…Maybe we found a way home."

Just as Yue said, there was a possibility. The transition magic that summoned beings from other world was an Ancient Magic.

"Looks like we have a guideline from now on. To conquer the 8 Great Dungeons when we return to the surface."

"Yeah."

Hajime loosen his cheeks as he got the guideline. He instinctively patted Yue's head, and her eyes squinted joyfully.

They were looking for more information, but they weren't able to find any data that showed the exact locations of the dungeon. Currently, the confirmed dungeons were "Mountain of Great Flames" around the Guruyuen Desert, and "Hartzena Sea of Trees". The rumored dungeons were "Raisen Great Canyon" and "Schnee Snowfield". They had no choice but to investigate all of them.

Satisfied with their search of the study, the two moved to the studio.

There were a lot of small rooms in the studio and they could open them all with Orcus' ring. Inside them were various never seen before ores and work tools. Theory books crowded the area and it could be mistaken as a paradise for Transmutation Masters.

Hajime folded his arms and pondered as he looked over the studio. When Yue saw him in that state, she looked puzzled and voiced it.

"…What's up?"

After being lost in thought for a while, Hajime proposed to Yue.

"Umm, that is Yue. Can we stay here for a bit? I want to quickly get to the surface but…there are many things to learn and this is the best base. When thinking about conquering the other Dungeon, I want to prepare as much as possible here. How about it?"

Yue had been sealed underground for 300 years and she did not want to lose a second in getting to the surface. However, after becoming speechless at Hajime's proposal; she immediately approved. Strangely, it was Hajime who thought that…

"…Anywhere is fine if Hajime is there."

That's how it is. Hajime tried to hide his embarrassment at Yue's surprise declaration.

Both of them decided to train and equip themselves as much as possible here.

* * *

Omake

Evening of that day, the sun in the ceiling had changed into a moon and gave off a pale light. Hajime let his whole body relax as he soaked in the bath. After falling into the abyss, this was the first time he had loosened up. A bath was often said to cleanse the mind.

"Phew, this is the best."

A voice that was unthinkable for the current Hajime's nature came out. When he loosened his whole body, he suddenly heard footsteps. The completely off-guard Hajime shivered. Although he said he would enter alone!

Of course, the one to make the sounds and enter the bath was…

"…Ah…feels so good…"

Yue immediately sat down near Hajime, stark naked.

"…Yue-san, didn't I say I'll enter alone?"

"…I refused."

“Wait a minute! I know that material!”

“…”

“…At least cover your front. There are plenty of towels.”

“Rather look.”

“…”

“…Eh.”

“…Ah, I’ve been hit.”

“…No you haven’t.”

“Why do you know that material? Fine, I’ll go!”

“I wont’ let you go!”

“Wa-Wait! Ah, Ahhhhh!!!”

I will leave the rest to your imagination.

* * *

Omake II

Kaori’s side.

“What’s this? Suddenly there is Killing Intent…”

“Kaori!? There is a Hannya behind you!”

Back to top

Chapter 4 : Departure

Two months have passed since Yue showed Hajime the dignity of a senior, and various breakthroughs were made from that night. As for Hajime, who continued enhancing his body and heart against the crazy monsters in the abyss, lost to Yue’s onslaught. He decided to take it seriously and accept it.

Hajime was aware of Yue’s feelings, on top of that he did promise to take her with him. His reason for withstanding her approach was his stance on not allowing something take his

attention until he achieved his objectives. Now he had conquered the dungeon and established a secure base. His goal was partially achieved when he discovered information and a plan to return home, and now his mind was allow to think about other things. His fragile reason couldn't oppose Yue's approach. Moreover, his reason didn't exist anymore.

The two of them made full use of the base. If anyone saw from the side they would likely yell: "Riajuu should explode!!" everyday. Far away, a Hannya mask floated around a female student. Her best friend had been frequently frightened by the situation, but that's another story. These were the preparation for the bloodshed in the near future.

"…Hajime, does it feel good?"

"Yeah, feels good."

"Fufu…Then, here?"

"Ah, that's good too."

"Better…I'll make it feel even better."

Currently, Yue was giving Hajime a massage. They weren't doing anything erotic. Why were they doing a massage? Because of Hajime's left arm. The massage was given on a regular basis to help his body get familiar with the prosthetic attached to his left arm.

His prosthetic arm is an artifact, and it could make like a real arm with the direct manipulation of magic. The arm had a pseudo neural mechanism, it allowed the touch sensation by using magic to send signals to the brain to perceive it. For its appearance, the arm had a silver luster with black lines running along it. In certain parts of the arm, there were magic formations and patterns engraved in it.

The arm was fitted with a large number of gimmicks. He had designed it similar to the items in the studio that were Orcus' works, but Hajime added some of his original elements into it. A lot of special ores made with Creation Magic was used. If it was out in the world, this artifact would no doubt be an article of rare beauty that would be a national treasure. Of course, ordinary people couldn't use it because you needed direct magic manipulation to operate it.

In two months their abilities and equipment were enhanced; they weren't anything like their previous selves. Hajime's current status.

Name	Nagumo Hajime	Age	17 Years Old
Gender	Male	Level	???
Class	Transmutation Artist (Synergist)		
Strength	10,950	Vitality	13,190
Resistance	10,670	Agility	13,450
Magic	14,780	Magic Resistance	14,780
Skills			
• Transmutation			

    -
    - Mineral Appraisal
    - Precision Transmutation
    - Mineral Enquiry
    - Mineral Separation
    - Mineral Fusion
    - Replica Transmutation
    - Compression Transmutation
- Magic Manipulation
    -
    - Magic Emission
    - Magic Compression
    - Remote Control
- Iron Stomach
- Lightning Clad
- Divine Step
    -
    - Air Walk
    - Flicker
    - Grand Legs
    - Light Speed
- Air Claws
- Night Vision
- Far Vision
- Perception
    -
    - Special Perception
- Magic Perception
    -
    - Special Perception
- Heat Perception
    -
    - Special Perception
- Hide Presence
    -
    - Phantom Step
- Poison Resistance
- Paralysis Resistance
- Petrification Resistance
- Panic Resistance
- All Elemental Resistance
- Foresight
- Varja
- Grand Arm
- Coercion
- Telepathic Communication
- High-Speed Magic Recovery
- Magic Conversion
    -
    - Vitality

    - Healing
- Limit Break
- Generation Magic
- Language Comprehension

Levels showed the current degree of growth and the limit was 100 for a person. However, did his body change so much after eating too much demon flesh? The level stopped changing but his stats kept going up. Finally, it displayed those ??? for his level.

Hajime's growth after he consumed demon flesh was a very abnormal, if you think about his initial values and his growth rate. When his body went into its alteration it seems his growth limit also increased; just like his stats increased. He guessed that the Status Plate was no longer able to measure his limits.

By the way, the limit of Kouki's Hero class was 1500 for all stats. He could temporarily triple his stats with "Limit Break", but it still was ? of Hajime's stats. Moreover, Hajime could quintuple his stats with his skill and magic manipulation. You can understand how he is a cheat now.

For comparison, the normal humans of this world had stat limits of 100-200. If they had a class then it could be 300-400. The Devils and Demi-humans, depending on the tribe traits, could range from 300-600 as their limit. If a Hero was cheat, then Hajime was more or less a monster. This wasn't really a mistake because his body and mind had changed…

Let's introduce the new equipment.

First, Hajime obtained a useful device known as "Treasure Box".

This was a ring type artifact that Oscar kept. There was a 1 cm red jewelry attached to the ring, and this jewel could make a space where it could store items. In short, it was like a hero's tool bag. Hajime did not know the exact size of the space, but it was a considerable size. There seemed to be free space still after putting in all the equipment, tools, and materials. Anything can be deposited or withdrawn by just pouring magic into the formation on the ring. Withdrawn items can be placed anywhere within a 1 m radius.

It is an extremely convenient artifact, especially useful for the one armed Hajime. If the ring could transport anything to any place than Hajime thought he could use it to reload. When the tested it, it was half a success. As expected, it did not have the precision to directly transfer the bullet into the magazine. The limit was the transfer had a certain range it could align the bullet's orientation. He might be able to use it when he became more skilled with the transmission.

Hajime decided to train to load a magazine with this transferring skill in the air. The important note is he was reloading in the air. Donner was a revolver that had a cylinder that swung out. Naturally, because the exposure of the cylinder was less than that of a top break revolver, it would require a superhuman technique to reload in the air. He wanted to use it in actual combat, not as a street performance, so it became more difficult. Hajime thought about

remodeling it to a top break style but decided against it because it weakened the intensity in the trial.

After intense training for one month, Hajime had mastered this aerial reloading. Why was he able to master such a superhuman technique with just one month training? His secret was "Light Speed". This Special Magic had the ability to raise the user's cognitive functions. With this, he was able to slow the world down in his mind and aerial reloading became possible. There was a large burden to his body when he used it, so he couldn't use it for very long. However, it was perfectly fine to use it for his fast reloading.

Next, Hajime manufactured "Magic 2-Wheel Drive and 4-Wheel Drive".

Literally, these were 2 and 4 wheels driven by magic. The two-wheel was an American type, and the four-wheel was designed like a military vehicle Hummer type. He used the tar shark resilience for the wheels because of its excellent elasticity. Tauru ore was the basis for all the parts. In the studio storage was Azantium Ore, at least that's what Oscar's book called it. Surfaces of the parts were coated with this ore, known as the world's hardest ore. Even Donner's maximum output probably wouldn't be able to pierce through that durability. There was no complex structures like engines. The vehicle was driven by Hajime's own magic or the magic stored in the fragment of God's Crystal. Speed was proportional to the amount of magic.

In addition, there were devices fitted to the bottom of these two vehicles. When magic is poured into these devices, it will start to level the ground with transmutation magic. This would allow them to travel off-road in most places. Also, the vehicles were fully loaded like some spy car. Hajime was a boy. He was passionate about anything related to military. When he was too absorbed in it, Yue would pout. But her mood would improve when he spoiled her in various ways.

"Devil Eye" was another tool he developed.

Hajime lost his right eye when he fought the Hydra. His whole eye was evaporated by the heat of the Aurora attack, and he couldn't get it back with sacred potion because he had lost it before he drank it. Yue was worried about it, so she devised and made "Devil Eye".

Even with Creation Magic, it was not possible to make a normal "eyeball". However, using Creation Magic, she was able to apply "Magic Perception" and "Foresight" to the God's Crystal. The Devil Eye was successfully created and it gave a very unusual but special sight.

Using the same pseudo nerves used in the artificial arm, the Devil Eye could send images to the brain to perceive. Devil eye did not grant normal vision. Instead, it could recognize the flow, strength and attribute of magic by color. He could see the core of the invoked magic.

What is the magic core? It is the thing that maintains and operates invoked magic…it seems. After invoking the magic, the magic is operated by the magic formation; he knew that. However, he had never thought about how the formula was linked with distant magic. None of the books and instructors had even mentioned anything about it. Probably it is a new discovery. Even Yue the magic expert didn't know anything about it.

The normal “Magic Perception” was the same as “Perception”. It was only able to perceive a vague sense of number and location. Monsters that could hide their senses affected the effectiveness of the skills. With Devil Eye, he would be able to know what magic and how strong the magic the opponent is using. Hajime could even destroy the magic if he pierce the core of the magic. However, shooting it would be like putting a bullet through a pinhole; it would require a lot of accuracy.

God’s crystal was used because it could retain these magic better than other materials. Hajime supposed that the reason was its ability to contain a vast amount of magic. Since he was still inexperienced with Creation Magic, he wasn’t able to grant three or more magic. With the God’s Crystal potential, they may be able to install many more magic into it when he is skilled enough; Hajime hoped.

Because they used the God’s Crystal for the Devil Eye, it constantly gave off a pale light. Hajime’s right eye constantly shined. There was no way to stop the glowing, so Hajime reluctantly put on a black eyepatch made of thin cloth.

White hair, artificial arm and an eyepatch. Hajime had completely became a Chuuni character. Calm down left arm! His figure seemed to say. When he saw himself in the mirror he despaired and entered an ORZ state. He stayed in bed for a whole day, and Yue tried to comfort him by various means…everyone didn’t want to talk about it.

About new weapons, Schlagen was revived after its destruction by the Hydra. The gun was strengthened using Azantium ore. Since he no longer had to worry about carrying it, he lengthened the barrel to 3 m. A scope was created with “Far Sight” installed and attached to the gun. This increased its maximum effective range to 10 km.

Hajime remembered the struggle he had when he was chased by the horde of raptors. He developed a gatling railgun: Metsurai. Fires 30 mm caliber rounds at 12,000 rounds per minute through its 6 barrels. The barrels were created from special ores that had cooling effects installed by creation magic, but it still couldn’t be used for more than 5 minutes continuously. If it overheats, it needs a 10 minute cooling period.

For surface supremacy, Hajime developed a rocket and missile launcher: Orca; purely because it was his interest. In the back was a 12-round rotary magazine for continuous fire, and it had an elongated barrel. He also had various kinds of rockets.

He even created another revolver to pair it with Donner: Schlag. Hajime could use both now that he had his artificial left arm. Using both at the same time, Hajime would be able to use Gun Kata as his basic tactics. With Yue as the typical rear guard, he considered close combat to efficiently cooperate with Yue. However, Hajime could be an all-rounder if he was properly equipped.

Other various equipment and tools were developed. However, contrary to being fully equipped, the God’s Crystal was finally depleted of its sacred water. Only 12 tube containers were left of the sacred water. They tried to pour magic into the God’s Crystal, but wasn’t able to extract sacred water. Maybe after many years of concentration it would flow again.

Throwing away the God’s Crystal would be a waste. It had saved his life…his lucky stone. Good luck piled up with good luck, he would be dead if he didn’t arrive at this crystal.

Hajime was extraordinarily attached to it because of that. Loneliness was unbearable to a survivor and painted a visage on his belonging. It was about the same as giving it a name and admiring it.

Hajime used the crystal's ability to contain enormous amount of magic; to make necklace, earrings, rings and other accessories with transmutation. He gave them to Yue. She was able to use very powerful magic. Her most powerful spells consumed a lot of magic, and just one shot would leave her depleted. If she was able to stock up her magic in a battery, she could use those superlative magic in rapid succession and not get magically exhausted.

He named the accessories set "Magic Crystal Series" and gave it to Yue. Her reaction at that time…

"…Proposal."

"Say What?"

Yue jumped at the first time hearing Hajime unintentionally using Kansai dialect with his Tsukkomi.

"It prevents magic exhaustion. I thought this would surely protect Yue from now on."

"…It is a proposal."

"No, that's wrong. Just new equipment."

"…Hajime, so shy."

"…Recently, you're not listening to people."

"…Even shy in bed."

"Will you stop!? Seriously, such a thing!"

"Hajime.."

"Ah, What is it?"

"Thanks…I love it."

"Oh."

Please, really explode already! These two were creating their own atmosphere. They were ready for everything in a lot of ways.

Ten days after that, Hajime and Yue were setting off for the surface.

While they were activating the magic on the third floor, Hajime told Yue in a quiet voice.

“Yue…My weapons, and our powers are heresy on the surface. The church and countries will not remain silent.”

“Nn…”

“They will demand our weapons and artifacts. There is a high possibility they will coerce us into participating in their war.”

“Nn…”

“This may be a dangerous trip that turns the world against us. No matter how many lives you have, it might be insufficient.”

“At this late of time…”

Hajime wryly smiled at her words. He gently stroke her fluffy hair, as she stared straight at him.

Yue squinted her eyes from the pleasant feeling. He took a moments pause, and stared back at the sparkling red eyes. Hajime put his wish and resolution into words, as he inscribed it into his soul.

“I will protect Yue, Yue will protect me. So we are the strongest. All will be mowed down, and we will cross worlds.”

At his words, Yue grasped both hands in front of the chest tightly; almost like a hug. Her expressionless face vanished to reveal a blooming smile. And answered like always,

“N~!”

Back to top

Chapter 5 : The Empire and the Heroes (Classmate Side 3 Part I)

We go back in time a little…

Around the time when Hajime defeated the Hydra in mortal combat, the party of heroes had temporarily aborted their dungeon clearing and returned to the Kingdom of Hairihi.

The clearing speed had fallen due to a lack of the comprehensive intelligence they had on the floors up till now, and also due to the strength and trickiness of the monsters. As such, intense member fatigue had resulted – the conclusion was to take a break and rest.

But though the rest town of Horuado would have been good for recuperation, someone was sent to meet them: they had to return to the palace. An envoy of the Hoelscher Empire had come wanting to meet with the heroes.

What was with this timing?

By nature, almost no time had passed between the arrival of the God Ehit's oracle and the summoning of Kouki and company. For this reason, the empire –which was an ally and did not itself conduct the hero summoning– would not be able to meet the heroes right after they were summoned.

However, it had been thought that the empire had not moved even after knowing of the heroes' summoning. This was because the empire had been founded 300 years ago by famous mercenaries, becoming a 'holy land' for adventures and sell-swords with its meritocratic system.

For them, talk of a group of heroes suddenly appearing and leading humanity was unconvincing. The Church was also in Hoelscher, and as such it was not an exception to having believers, but they were less devout than those in Hairihi. Most of its people were either mercenaries or were involved in the business, and as such there were more who valued profits over faith. If anything, this was just a story; it would hardly make earnest believers out of them.

Based on that, it was possible that they had made light of meeting up with Kouki and the rest just after their summoning. Of course, they were not against openly showing an obeisant attitude towards God in front of the church. While Haihiri would have been happy to patronize such a meeting, the empire –particularly His Imperial Majesty– had not been interested, and as such had not been involved.

However, the fact that this raid on the [Orcus Dungeon] had succeeded in breaking through the 65th floor, beating out the previous record, piqued the interest of the empire. So they sent word that they would like to meet, and both the church and Hairihi were quick to agree.

After this news was meticulously related to Kouki and company on the carriage, they arrived at the palace.

The carriage entered the palace, and upon their descent from it they saw a figure of a boy coming towards them. He was around ten, and had blonde hair and blue eyes. The atmosphere around him was similar to Kouki's, but which much more mischief in it. This was Randell S. B. Hairihi, Prince of the Kingdom. His air could be likened to that of a dog with flopping ears and wagging tail as he rushed up to them calling in a loud voice:

"Kaori! You made it back! I've been waiting!"

Of course, Kaori was not the only one there, for the returning expedition was present in full force. To them, it was easy to imagine what Randell's feelings were just by looking at his attitude – apart from Kaori he saw no one else.

In fact, Prince Randell had been making aggressive approaches towards Kaori since the day after they had been summoned. That said, he was only ten. In her view he could only be

recognized as an emotionally attached child, and there was no sign of her feelings ripening beyond that. For a person as innately kind as her, he would be like a cute younger brother.

“It’s been a while, Your Highness.”

(TN: She says ‘Randell-dono’, but I’m the kind of translator who gets into hissy fits about putting random Japanese into my sentence when the English equivalent serves perfectly fine.)

The imaginary tail wagged furiously up and down at her small smile, as Randell instantly turned red. Despite that, he managed to make a masculine expression before making another ‘approach’ toward Kaori.

“Ah, it’s been a long time indeed. When you said you were going to the dungeon, I felt as though I had died. Were you hurt? If I was stronger, I would never let you do such a thing…”

Randell bit his lip in annoyance. Even though Kaori refused to only be protected, the heartwarming feelings of the boy still caused her cheeks to soften.

“Thank you for your concern. But I’m alright, you know? I wish to do this.”

“No, Kaori isn’t suited for fighting. Th, there should, you know, be safer things you can do.”

“Safer things?”

Kaori inclined her head at his words, and at this he turned an even deeper shade of red. Observing this amusing exchange from the side, Shizuku could only smile wryly as she considered the young man’s valiant ‘approach’.

“Mmhmm. For example, how about being a maid? You can work exclusively for me, starting today.”

“As a maid? I’m sorry, but I’m a healer…”

“T-then, going to the Medical Institute is fine too. There’s no need to go to dangerous places like the dungeons or the frontlines right?”

The Institute was a state-run hospital, situated right beside the royal palace. In short, Randell hated being apart from Kaori. However, the feelings of the young boy would not move Kaori’s obstinacy.

“No, I won’t be able to heal them immediately if I’m not on the frontlines. Thank you for worrying about me.”

“Uu…” Randell groaned softly, realizing that he could not move Kaori’s determination.

“Your Highness, Kaori is my precious childhood friend. As long as I am around, I will definitely continue to protect her!”

From Kouki's viewpoint, he was being one-hundred-percent-beneficent in comforting a younger boy, but those were not the right words for that moment. In the eyes of the lovestruck Randell, this was translated as such:

"I won't let my woman leave me. I definitely won't hand Kaori over to anybody!" (TN: The first bit is a bit dodgy, since my ability to recognize that variant on the kanji for 'hand' is currently failing me.)

The hero and the healer snuggling up intimately – that was a likely picture in his mind. His expression twisted in annoyance, Randell levelled a 'you are my mortal enemy' glare at Kouki. To him, they looked like lovers.

"What are you saying? You think nothing of sending Kaori into dangerous places. I won't lose to you! Kaori being with me is the better decision."

[T/N: Chauvinist pig, he uses the word kimatteiru, which indicates a decision without the target (Kaori's) individual input. i.e. "it has been decided" versus "I/you have decided"]

"Umm, well."

At the hostile words that Randell spoke, Kaori was at a loss and just smiled weakly, while Kouki was speechless. Shizuku, seeing Kouki like this, could only sigh.

Before Kouki could say anything more to aggravate the already growling, angered prince, a cool but authoritative voice rang out.

"Randell. Behave yourself. Can't you see Kaori is troubled?"

"B, big sister! …B, But!"

"No buts. Even though everyone is tired – to detain them in this place…who is it who isn't thinking about others?"

"Ugh…B, but!"

"Randell?" (TN: I imagine she is projecting some kind of dark aura at him right about now.)

"E..errand! I remember, I had an errand to run! Excuse me!"

Refusing to admit his error, Randell turned on his heel and fled. Seeing his back fade from view, Princess Liliana spoke with a sigh.

"Kaori, Kouki-san, I'm sorry about my brother. My apologies on his behalf."

Liliana lowered her head as she said that, causing her beautiful, straight blonde hair to flow downward.

"Mm, don't worry about it, Lili. Prince Randell was just concerned."

“I agree. Still, I don’t understand why he got angry…I didn’t say anything rude that I had to apologize for.”

Kaori and Kouki said this as Liliana smiled thinly. Understanding well the sibling love between an older sister and her younger brother, Kaori sympathized with Liliana to some extent for having a brother completely ignorant of her feelings. Above all, it was important that the ‘mortal enemy’ knew that she was separate from this matter.

By the way, the meetings between Randell and his ‘mortal enemy’ would cause a big stir…but that’s another story.

Liliana was a talented lady of fourteen years. Golden haired and blued eyed, she was both beautiful and popular amongst the people. Earnest, but not too obstinate, and good at reading the mood, she was even able to interact openly with the servants.

She, as a princess and as a person, had been quite anxious as to the state of Kouki and the other summoned students. This was due to a sense of guilt about dragging them into problems of her world, which should have been their concern.

For that reason, she took the initiative to get to know the students, and it had not been long before they became well acquainted. She got along especially well with Shizuku and Kaori who were around the same age as her, by this point they had dropped all honorifics, electing to speak casually with one other and even giving each other nicknames.

“No, Kouki-san. There is no need to worry about Randell. He just tends to be a bit reckless. More importantly…Once again, welcome back, everyone. I am heartily glad that you all returned safely.”

Saying this, Liliana smiled gently. Even those classmates who were standing close to beauties like Kaori and Shizuku all blushed when they saw her smile. There was a refined elegance of royalty in her that the two of them did not have, something that most young women could not compete with using beauty alone.

In fact, Nagayama’s group and the delinquent group were also crimson from having their hearts stolen; even female members were slightly dyed in the cheek. For ordinary modern day students, the aura of a bona fide Otherworldly Princess was too much. Those who could bear it, like Kaori and those already close to the princess, were abnormal in this regard.

“Thank you, Lili. Your smile has blown my fatigue away. I too am glad to see you,” Kouki said such affected lines with a refreshing smile. Though it has been repeated often, Kouki did not have any ulterior motive in saying this. He was truly glad to be alive, and to meet a friend once again – he was just pathologically unaware of the effects his words and actions had.

“R, re, really? U, um…”

As a princess, Liliana was used to the compliments and flattery paid by the gentry, imperial envoys and the people of the cities and towns. As such, she had trained herself to become adept at looking past these masks and discerning their true intentions. Thus she could see that there was no such thing in Kouki’s words. Unused to such experiences outside of her family, Liliana’s cheeks too went red, and she became flustered and unable to respond.

Kouki, as usual, just continued laughing and smiling, not realizing at all the effects his behavior had. And as expected, this caused Shizuku to sigh deeply. Someone worrisome had taken the stage, and yet the person himself would resolutely fail to notice it.

“Um, anyway, thank you all for your hard work. Preparations for the meal and baths have already been completed, so please make yourselves at home. The imperial envoys will take a few more days to arrive, so you needn’t worry about that.”

Having recovered her balance, Liliana urged them thus.

While Kouki and the others were unwinding the fatigue accumulated in the dungeon, the groups who had stayed behind heard of Behemoth’s defeat, and jubilant shouts went out amongst them. After this, the number of people who returned to the frontline increased. Aiko-sensei’s title of “Goddess of Fertility” also became a topic at this point, which caused her to writhe quite a lot.

Kouki and the others slowly rested their bodies, which had been exhausted from the raid.

But inwardly Kaori was restless; she desired to return to the dungeon.

Back to top

Chapter 6 : The Empire and the Heroes (Classmate Side 3 Part II)

Continuing from the previous…

3 days later, the imperial envoys finally arrived.

Currently, Kouki, the dungeon clearing members, leaders of the kingdom, and a delegation of priests led by Ishtar were out in full force to receive the five envoys, who were standing in the middle of the red carpet opposite King Erihid (TN: is this his name?)

“It was good of you to come, sir envoys. Do well, therefore, to make certain of our heroes’ surpassing valour.”

“Your majesty, you have our thanks indeed for accepting this sudden request for an audience. That said…may we know the identity of the Hero?”

“Mm. We will introduce him first. Sir Kouki, would you step forward?”

“Yes.”

The unveiling of Kouki and the others followed immediately after the formal salutations between the king and the messengers, with the King calling him to appear before them. Despite the fact that not even two months had passed, his look was utterly fearless, quite unlike when first summoned.

While they were not here, if the palace maids, noble ladies and Kouki's fans in the stay-behind group saw him now they would without a doubt start going red in the face and releasing heated sighs of fascination. Those who had made advances on Kouki already numbered in the double digits…but due to his extreme denseness, their approaches were just those of "warm and friendly people" to him. A naturally dense hero was walking the earth.

(TN: This is one of the things I think the author absolutely has to fix if this webnovel becomes an LN – these asides that are basically like 'wut, what, where?' moments in terms of plot. I know he's trying to funny, but still…)

After this the heroes were introduced, starting from Kouki.

"Oh, so you are the heroes. Quite young, I must say. Pardon my rudeness, but did you truly break through the 65th floor? If memory serves, a monster known as the Behemoth appears there…"

While scrutinizing Kouki, the messenger also took in Ishtar's open manner, and cast a suspicious gaze upon him. One of the envoy's bodyguards also looked the Hero up and down in an appraising manner.

Being discomfited by their gazes, Kouki answered them.

"Well, may I speak? As to whether we defeated it…ah, would you like to look at a map of the 66th floor?"

Kouki proposed various proofs, but the envoy shook his head and allowed a smile to drift onto his face.

"No, thank you. There is a quicker method than that. Would you have a mock battle with one of my guards? That way, I would be able to see your strength immediately, Sir Hero."

"Well, I don't mind, but…"

Kouki looked back at the king, slightly puzzled. Having caught that look, the king himself turned to Ishtar for his approval. He nodded. With Ehit's authority behind him, it would have been an easy matter to convince the empire to accept Kouki as humanity's leader, but a real battle was the quickest way to make the meritocratic empire truly recognize him as such.

"Very well. Sir Kouki, show them your strength as you desire."

"It's decided then. Well, we will impose upon you to prepare a location."

So it was in this abrupt manner that the mock battle between the hero and the envoy's bodyguard was decided.

Kouki's opponent could not be a more ordinary person. He was neither particularly tall nor short, bereft of any notable features, and had a face one could easily lose sight of in a crowd. At first blush, there was nothing "strong" about him at all.

He held his large edgeless sword downward casually – a stance that may as well not have been one at all.

Kouki was a little angered by this. He would give this person a taste of his spirit with the first blow, and make him devote himself seriously as well.

“Here I come!”

Kouki came in like the wind. His swift “High Speed Movement” narrowed the space between them at once as he swung his bamboo sword down with a powerful whipping sound. If this was an ordinary warrior, he would have had trouble even perceiving it. Of course, Kouki intended to stop just before hitting. But there was no point worrying about that. Rather, it was Kouki who was going to get a taste of ‘proof’ from the outcome.

CRACK!

“Guh!”

The one blown away was Kouki. The bodyguard readied his sword after that swing, glaring at him. At the instant where he had stopped his simulated attack and relaxed, his opponent had casually knocked his sword upward, causing him to be pushed back.

“Haaa…Hey, hey, hero, is that all you’ve got? Everything? What happened to your motivation?”

Rude words that ill-befit an ordinary face came from the bodyguard as his expression showed first astonishment, and then gave way to rising disappointment.

Indeed, Kouki had made such a casual thrust from the front because he had judged the bodyguard based on his appearance, and he had clearly been repulsed in his present state. Having come to a realization about himself due to this experience with his opponent, he was once again angry – but this time the anger was self-directed.

(TN: Not sure about this paragraph, because the author uses the term ‘composition’ for some reason that my lousy Japanese won’t let me perceive; I replace it therefore with ‘state’, which I can see fitting into the English)

“I’m sorry. Please take care of me once more.”

This time Kouki’s eyes were serious, even as he apologized for his poor manners. Seeing him like this, the bodyguard made a displeased face and said,

“There are no ‘next times’ on the battlefield.”

Nonetheless, he resumed his natural stance, indicating that he would continue.

Letting out a battle cry, Kouki charged.

Enhanced by “High Speed Movement”, the bamboo blade swung diagonally down, upwards, and then forwards in a thrust. The swiftness was such that wavering afterimages were left behind in Kouki’s wake.

But even against such a storm of sword-blows, the guard seemed to dodge using only the bare minimum of movements, looking for a chance to counterattack. Even when he lost track of Kouki’s movements and was attacked in his blind spot, he could still fend the hero off.

The guard’s movements caused Kouki to remember something – Knight Captain Meld. There were already considerable differences in their specs, but so far he had been unable to surpass him in a mock battle. The reason for this was an overwhelming difference in combat experience.

Most likely, the guard was the same, having stood on many battlefields before this one, and his combat experience could fill up the gap in their specs. In short, this person was on the same level as or even above Meld.

“Hmm. I guess at this level of physical ability an ordinary man wouldn’t be your match. Still, there’s something missing. You didn’t have any affinity for battle originally, right?”

“Huh? Um, yes, that’s true. I was a mere student at first.”

“And now you’re the ‘Apostle of God’, huh.”

Ishtar and his associates from the church snorted in displeasure at the guard.

“Hey, hero. Prepare yourself, I’ll be going at you from here on out. Don’t go easy on me, or you might get killed.”

So declaring, he charged. This charge was a not high speed movement on Kouki’s level. Instead, it felt almost slow…and yet,

“Tch?!”

As the guard approached his blade seemed to leap upwards from below, causing Kouki to retreat in alarm. But like an attracted magnet, the blade maintained the distance between them, moving in like a whip as it struck.

The sword’s trajectory was irregular and the movements hard to perceive, and while the use of “Foresight” allowed him to momentarily put some distance between them, he was unable to fully break away. Even when he tried to used “High-Speed Movement” to break off in one go, his opponent would foresee it, and launch pre-emptive strikes such that he could not activate it. Gradually, impatience began to show on Kouki’s face.

“Pierce, Wind Strike.”

At the murmured aria a cluster of wind formed, and struck him squarely in the leg.

“Uwah?!”

Caught in mid-step, Kouki's leg swung outward and his balance was broken. In that instant, a fierce bloodlust pierced him. The guard's cold gaze met his, and he swung his blade downward with an unbelievable pressure.

He's going to kill me, Kouki suddenly realized. (TN: Well, we're slow aren't we?)

Indeed, the guard could not help but think this way. If Kouki could not keep up with his attacks, his intent was to kill him rather than allow a boy who knew nothing of killing to become humanity's leader. This would certainly invite censure from the likes of the church, but to put incompetent allies on the battlefield was much harder to stomach. As such, this might be the better choice, or so he felt.

(TN: Another paragraph that I sucked at translating. I pray this is at least 50% accurate.)

But the swing would never happen.

BOOOOM

"Guh!?"

The exact same scenario occurred as it did previously, but this time it was the guard getting blown away. Bounding away several times with both hands to negate the momentum, the guard looked at Kouki. His whole body was emitting a pure white aura, and he swung his sword to face his opponent while taking up a stance.

At the moment when the guard let fall his blade, Kouki's survival instincts had kicked in and activated his "Limit Break". This technique caused all his parameters to multiply three times – a 'technique for a pinch' unique to a protagonist.

However, his face was hardly composed. Desperately repressed fear from being so close to death was in his expression as he held his sword.

Seeing this, the guard's fearless grin resurfaced.

"Hey, that's a slightly better face. Compared to that wimpy one from before, that is."

"Wimpy face? I'm frightened. Were you trying to kill me just now? Wasn't this a mock battle?"

"So what? Did you think that in a real battle, we'd just go "okay, it's over"? You'd end up dead like that. You're supposed to stand above us humans and lead us – are you even aware of that?"

"I'm aware…of course I will save everyone!"

"What can a kid who's afraid of getting hurt do? Someone who doesn't even have bloodlust in his sword shouldn't talk big. Well then, are you ready? I said it at the start…that you'll die if you go easy on me!"

Once again, the guard advanced, an abnormal feeling of bloodlust coming off him, putting pressure on Kouki, who gathered strength in his legs, his face twisting painfully as he did so.

But he did not charge. A barrier of light had fallen between him and Kouki.

“This much will do. At this rate, it’ll stop being a mock battle and become a killing duel instead. You have overstepped yourself with this joke, Lord Gahard.”

“Tch, I’ve been found out. As shrewd as ever, old man.”

Ishtar, having erected that shimmering barrier, proceeded to pour a wet blanket on “Lord Gahard” the guard, who cursed inaudibly in response, sheathed his sword in his shoulder-mounted scabbard, and took off his right earring.

The air around the guard turned a misty white, and when it finally cleared again, there appeared a totally different person.

It was a man who looked to be in his forties. His silver hair was cropped short, and his blue eyes were reminiscent of a wild wolf. His figure was slender but highly muscled, his clothes wrapping tightly around them almost to the point of bursting.

On seeing him, a commotion broke out.

“Lord Gahard!”

“Your Imperial Highness!”

Indeed, this man was Gahard D. Hoelscher, present Emperor of the Hoelscher Empire, in disguise. Seeing this, King Erihid furrowed his brows and asked:

“Just what were you intending, Emperor Gahard?”

“There, there, King Erihid. I apologize for not introducing myself. However, a little play-fighting was the quickest way for me to make sure. This is of great importance to our future battles. Please excuse my rudeness.”

Though Gahard excused himself this way, his expression was hardly apologetic. “Well, fine”, Erihid seemed to indicate with a sigh.

Kouki was totally stunned. Somehow, this emperor was kind of flighty, and his ‘surprises’ seemed to be treated as the norm too.

With that, the mock battle ended, and at the dinner that was arranged the empire gave their official words of recognition to the hero. For the time being, it seemed like the objectives of their visit had been met.

But that night, when a subordinate asked him about his real intentions in a room, the king gave a bothersome answer.

“Meh, he’s no use. Just a kid. A mouth that believes unswervingly in stuff like ideals and justice. His rash strength and charisma are a bad combination, and he’s the type who would get killed for his ideals. But we can’t neglect him since he’s the “Apostle of God”. All in all, he isn’t good.”

(TN: Take this paragraph with a healthy pinch of salt. My translation of these sentences is definitely iffy due to an overabundance of katana in colloquial use – which I am failing to grasp even with the dictionary.)

“So, you intended to kill him during that match?”

“What? No. I just thought I might fix his cowardly attitude with a beating. I wouldn’t have killed him even if the Pope hadn’t intervened.”

It seemed like the Emperor did not regard Kouki and the rest of the heroes to be worth his attention. This was not unreasonable. Up till a few months ago they had been mere students; in peaceful Japan no less. They did not have the readiness on the battlefield that a seasoned warrior would recognize.

“Well, the war with the demons may pick up the pace soon. We’ll see about it then. For now, let’s prioritize tactfully keeping ourselves from being involved with that kid…and to watch out for the Pope.”

“As you will.”

He had no intention to reveal his real estimation, however, and the very next day Kouki and the other heroes would see him off when he returned to his country; with his business finished, there was no reason to stay any longer. Indeed, he seemed a very flighty Emperor.

By the way, there was an incident in which the emperor came across Shizuku during her morning training, and being pleased with her he requested rather earnestly that she become his lover. Upon her polite refusal, he just gave his usual plucky laugh and a “well, I’m not in a hurry” as his reply, indicating that this matter wasn’t of great importance to him. At that moment, he caught side of Kouki and laughed through his nose at him. Kouki for his part got the feeling that they would never get along, and was momentarily displeased by this.

It also goes without saying that Shizuku’s sighs increased.

Back to top

Chapter 7 : Raisen Grand Canyon and the Miserable Rabbit

Their view was filled by the light from the magic circle, the air definitely felt different even though nothing could be seen. It’s clearly different compared to the air from the depth of the hell, sensing the fresh air from somewhere, Hajime’s cheeks are loosened.

The sight that came into view after the light settled was…

A cave.

“Say what?”

Without any further thought, Hajime who believed that the other side of the magic circle was the surface unintentionally inserted a tsukkomi at the scene which weren’t any better. Honestly he was extremely disappointed.

Facing Yue who was tugging his shirt with a questioning face Yue told him her opinion in a comforting way.

“… A secret passage… …to be hidden is usual”

“A, ah, is that so? It certainly is. There is no way that the direct way to den of the rebels wouldn’t be hidden right”

To not realize something so simple, Hajime felt considerably ashamed. He pulls himself together while scratching his head. Without aid from the Green Light Stone, Hajime and Yue advanced through the pitch black cave without any problems.

On the way, though there were many doors with seals and traps, the Orcus Ring would react cancelling the activation altogether. The two of them were cautious at first, but soon lost interest as nothing had happened so far and continued to advance, till they finally found light. It’s the light from the surface. The light which Hajime for the past few month, and Yue for the past three hundred years sought for.

Hajime and Yue came to a stop when they saw it, looking at each other exchanging glance the both of them grinning, and simultaneously started to run toward the light that they yearned for.

As they approach the light which was gradually getting bigger, they could feel and breathe the air from the surface. It was different from the stagnant air from hell. The air was cool and fresh. Hajime had never felt as much as now how delicious the air was.

Thus, Hajime and Yue both jumped into the light… … and reached the long awaited surface.

To the humans who live above grounds, this pace was a hell, an execution ground. Below the cliff, magic could hardly be used, even so, a lot of powerful and brutal monster live there. An Average of 1-2 kilometre depth, and 900 meter width, extending 8 kilometre from [Guryuen Great Desert] on the west and [Harzena Sea of Trees] at the east, the great scar dividing the north-south of the continent, was how people call it.

“Raisen Grand Canyon”

Hajime and Yue were currently outside of the cave at the bottom of the Raisen Grand Canyon. Although they were at the bottom of the earth, the sun from above poured down bright and warm light. The fragrant of the surface mixed with the wind were tickling their nose.

Compared to any kind of place it could have been, this place was surely the surface. In a daze while looking at the sun above their head, Hajime and Yue's facial expression gradually turned into smile. Even Yue, who was expressionless by default, could be seen smiling broadly by anyone who looked.

"…We are back aren't we…?"

"…nn"

The two finally hit by an overwhelming happy feeling of reality, looked away from the sun, glanced at each other and with all their strength started hugging each other.

"Yeaaaahhhh~~!! We are back, damnit~!"

"Hnn~~!!"

While hugging Yue who had a smaller stature, Hajime spun around. In that short while, an unsuitable laughing voice could be heard from the place that people called hell. On the way, even stumbling on the uneven ground felt excessively funny, both of them are chuckling and laughing.

At last, after the two laughter settled down, they were completely… … surrounded by monsters.

"Haa~ these guys are really dense aren't they?… … If I remember correctly, we can't use magic here right?"

Hajime tilt his head while pulling out Donner & Schlag. Hajime who had made an effort while studying knew that if this place really is Raisen Grand Canyon, then magic could not be used.

"… I know. However I will still do it, but using mere sheer strength."

The reason that magic could not be used inside Raisen Grand Canyon was because the magic power that are loaded into the magic that are invoked are disintegrating and dispersed. Of course Yue's magic was not an exception. But Yue who was once a Vampire Princess, in addition of the considerable magic power she have, she also possess an external magic tank which is the Magic Crystal Series.

In other word, Yue is saying something like she should just annihilate them before the big power got dispersed.

"By sheer power… How high is the efficiency?"

"…Around 10 percent."

It seems like, in order to use elementary magic, high class magic power are needed. The range too would be shortened a lot.

"A~ then I will do it, Yue just focus on defending yourself."

“Uu… …but”

“It’s okay, the right person in the right place. This place is a bad place for magic user right? Just leave it to me.”

“N… …okay.”

Yue reluctantly withdraws. Even though they had reached the long awaited surface ground, it’s hard to accept that she was excluded from the first battle. Her pride seems to have been a little damaged. Her lip was sulking from the displeasure.

Looking at Yue’s sulking appearance, Hajime abruptly fired Donner while making a wry smile. Without looking at the other party’s side, pointing the gun muzzle to the spontaneously gulping monsters, and spontaneously pulling the trigger.

Without realizing the much too sudden attack, the surrounding monster’s head burst and scattered which resulted in dead without any resistance. There were only a gun’s reverberation sound left in the vicinity, the monsters were frozen in place without understanding what exactly happened. Surely if 10% of magic can be used, even “Lightning Clad” could be used here. Then the rail gun could be launched without any trouble.

To the dumbfounded monsters, Hajime showed a bold smile.

“Now then, the monsters from hell compared with you guys, which one is stronger… …let me try it out.”

Quickly taking Gun Kata stance, killing intent was filling Hajime’s eyes. When the surrounding monsters saw those eyes they unconsciously took one step back. Even if they didn’t notice it, their surely instinct felt it. That they had made, a ‘monster’ which they shouldn’t oppose their enemy.

An ordinary person would have their consciousness gone just from getting into the fierce pressure range, at last one monster which couldn’t hold the tension anymore let out a roar and jump out.

“Graaaaa!!”

Bang!!

But, at the same time resounded a gunshot along with a straight flash line, rather than evading somewhere, that monster weren’t even give any time to respond and got blown off.

The things that happened after that weren’t even a fight anymore but a slaughter. The monsters weren’t allowed to run away even one step farther, it’s as if that it was natural that their head get blown off and their insides are exposed. There the monsters corpses were filling the view for as far as one can see in just five minutes.

Putting Donner and Schlag away in their respective holster beside his thigh, Hajime looked at the mountain of corpse in the surrounding while tilting his head a bit.

From behind, Yue approached with small steps.

“…What wrong?”

“No, it’s just a little disappointing… …The monsters at Raisen Grand Canyon are famous for their brutality I almost thought that this was a whole different place instead.”

“…Hajime is a ‘monster'”

“Cruel aren’t you. Well, it just means that the monsters in hell are just too strong.”

Hajime said that while shrugging his shoulder, and averted his eyes from the monster’s dead body as he had lost interest in it.

“Now then, for this cliff I think we can climb it… …what should we do? If we think of Raisen Grand Canyon, there should be one of the Seven Great Dungeon around here. After all this trouble, how about we head toward the sea of trees and do some search while we are at it?”

“…Why the sea of trees?”

“No, well, after getting out of the canyon, you don’t want to abruptly cross the dessert right? If it’s the sea of trees, there should also a village nearby.”

“…Certainly it is.”

Yue nodded to Hajime proposal. Looking at how weak the monsters were it seems like the Canyon itself can’t be counted as a dungeon. In that case, there should be an entrance to the dungeon somewhere. If they used Hajime’s “Air Walk” or Yue’s Wind Magic, they could easily climb the cliff, but in whichever the case, there was the need to investigate the Raisen Grand Canyon, even more so there was no reason to oppose.

Hajime poured magic into the “Treasure Warehouse” on his middle finger, and took out a Magic Powered 2-Wheeled Drive from it. Straddling dashingly, Yue got on the vehicle horizontally and clung to Hajime’s waist. Different from using Gasoline like on Earth, the vehicle use direct magic operation to directly move the parts that are connected to the wheel, so the engine was quiet like an electric automobile. Hajime thought that the Engine roaring sound would have felt more romantic, but he did not know other structure than using the simple structure, he could not reproduce the sound. By the way, the speed adjustment was dependent on the amount of the magic power poured in. Well, under normal circumstances, the magic power efficiency inside Raisen Grand Canyon was the worst, so it could not be used for a long time.

Raisen Grand Canyon was basically a cliff that extends straight from east to west. There was hardly any bypath therefore just by advancing along the way would lead them to sea of trees without getting lost. Hajime and Yue didn’t have to worry about losing their way, carefully searching for the entrance of the dungeon, while casually traveling with the Magic Powered Two Wheeled Vehicle. Below the vehicle frame was installed a mechanism to level the bad road in the bottom of the cliff with transmutation as they advance, it truly was comfortable.

Though, in that mean time, Hajime hands had been restlessly continue moving, without even releasing the hand, Hajime kicked off the crowd of monsters who was trying to attack them.

A little while after driving the Magic Powered Two Wheeled Vehicle, a monster roar could be heard not that far from where they were. It was considerably powerful. At least it was one level higher compared to the monsters they had encountered inside the cliff. It seems like they would have to fight it within another 30 seconds.

Driving the Magic Powered Two Wheeled Vehicle around the protruding rocks, a large monster appeared. It was a Tyrano-like monster, though it had two heads. It's a double-headed Tyrannosaurus-like monster.

But the one getting attention wasn't the double-headed Tyrant, but the girl with rabbit ears jumping around repeatedly with half crying face.

Hajime stopped the Magic Powered 2-Wheeled Drive and look at the suspicious looking about to get eaten rabbit eared girl.

"… What is that?"

"… Rabbit Tribe?"

"Why is it in this place? Are the Rabbit Tribe this place inhabitant?"

"…Never heard of that"

"Then, isn't it that? She was dropped here as a criminal? Isn't this place also used as execution place?"

"…Bad rabbit?

Hajime and Yue inclining their head, while talking care freely about the rabbit eared girl. It seems like there was no will to help her. Particularly, from the fact that Raisen Grand Canyon was used as one of execution method, they weren't even considering the fact that the rabbit eared girl might be a criminal. Rather than thinking of a complete stranger, they thought that it would be bothersome and didn't have any real interest in doing it.

But as expected, the aftereffect of the change of mentality in the brutal way. And the circumstances were different compared with Yue. There was no sympathy felt toward the rabbit eared girl, even more there was no merit it didn't even reach Hajime's heart. If he always reacts to help request, there would be no end to it. The Hajime right now had already deserted the world itself.

However, it seems that the rabbit eared girl had detected the carefree Hajime and Yue. After getting blown off by the double headed Tyrant and fallen to the shade of a rock, hurriedly stood back up on her hands and feet's to run away, in that pose she stare at Hajime.

And once again the double headed Tyrant swung it's claw at the rock where she was hiding and blew it off, grumbling while rolling on the ground, she escaped from the fierce killing attack along with that momentum. … Toward Hajime place.

Though there was some distance between them, the desperate shout from the rabbit eared girl echoed through the canyon and reached Hajime place.

“Heelph me~e! Hii~~?I’m dying! I’m dyiiing! Help mee~, pleasee~!”

She ran desperately while the floods of tears were flowing on the soggy face. Right behind her was the approaching double headed Tyrant that wants to bite the rabbit eared girl. At this rate, the rabbit eared girl would be eaten even before she could reach Hajime place.

As one would expect, directly getting asked for help to this degree, even Hajime… …

“Uwa, that’s a Monster Train. Don’t involve me in that.”

“…It’s bothersome.”

As expected they didn’t have the motivation to help. Even at the desperate screaming, they didn’t even get disturbed. Instead, they felt it was extremely bothersome. To the Hajime who averted his eyes from the desperate glare of the rabbit eared girl, maybe she sensed that Hajime didn’t want to help her, from the girl’s eyes, even more tears overflowed, just from where did those tears come from kind of crying.

“Waiiit~, don’t leabe me behi~ind! Pleasee~!!”

The rabbit eared girl raised her voice even more.

Even so, Hajime still didn’t feel any motivation to help her at all, at this rate, the rabbit eared girl without fail would get eaten. Right, that if the double headed Tyrant didn’t goes around the rabbit eared girl and direct his killing intent at them.

The double headed Tyrant went around in between Hajime and the rabbit eared girl, and released a roar with killing intent.

“”Gruuaaaaaaa!!””

Hajime reacted sensitively to it.

“Aa?”

Just now, his existence was denied. The object of preying was seen. The enemy is standing on the way! To the double headed Tyrant’s killing intent, Hajime body reacted, to the enemy who had the intent to kill! Like that.

The double headed Tyrant caught up with the rabbit eared girl, one of the head opened its jaw. The rabbit eared girl, sensing that sign and looked behind and looking at the countless sharp fangs closing before her eyes, “Ah, it’s ending here eh… …” despair words like that could be seen in her eyes.

However at the next moment,

Bang!!

A sound of dry explosion that she never heard before resounded across the canyon a flash line could be seen passing through the two rabbit ears standing due to fear. And now, one of the approaching double headed Tyrant's head were pierced and pulverized from the back of the head right before her eyes.

The other head that lost its strength crashed into the grounds, following the law of inertia, sliding on the ground. The double headed Tyrant that lost its balance toppled over the place while creating rumbling voices.

From the impact, the rabbit eared girl once again get blown away. The place she landed was clearly right before Hajime.

"Kyaaaaaa~! He, help please~e!"

While falling toward Hajime who was before her eyes, the rabbit eared girl's hand were reaching out to him. Her outfit was all tattered, and a place that shouldn't be seen for a woman was clearly visible. And with the awful crying face, it was a scene where a man would without a doubt catch her.

"Are you stupid?, Impudent"

However, it was Hajime Quality. In an instant he poured magic to the Magic Powered 2-Wheeled Drive to retreat and magnificently evaded the rabbit eared girl.

"Eeh~!?"

The rabbit eared girl shocked shriek could be heard while she was falling right before Hajime eyes, twitching while lying face down with both arms and legs extended out. She didn't pass out, but it seems like she couldn't move while enduring the pains.

"…Amusing."

Yue looked at the shameful sight of the rabbit eared girl over Hajime shoulder, and held a lightly cruel impression. In the meantime, the other one of the double-headed Tyrant's head, bite and eating it's dead head and regained its balance, now had become more like a normal Tyrant at side glance.

The normal Tyrant with fury and anger in its eyes let out a roar. The rabbit eared girl jump up to wake up at the sound, unexpectedly stout, or rather stubborn. Desperately trying to stand up the rabbit eared girl, once again with teary eyes, and with an unexpectedly fast movement hid behind Hajime.

It seems like she was motivated to rely on Hajime to the bitter end. Well, she will die by herself, and she could comprehend that Hajime had done something to knocked down one of the heads, of course it's an expected action.

"Oi, kora. A gag like existence Rabbit ear! Why the hell did you make us as your shield without permission, don't drag us into it. Be manly and do a suicidal attack!"

To the rabbit eared girl who is grasping the hem of Hajime's coat, I absolutely wouldn't release it! From the bottom of his heart Hajime glare at her with annoyed eyes. Yue who was sitting on the back seat was pushing the rabbit eared girl with her leg, like telling her to "Release it".

"N, no way! Now, you would abandon me if I release it right!?"

"Isn't that natural? Why should I help an unfamiliar annoying rabbit?"

"Immediate reply!? Which part is natural! Even you should have a good heart right! Don't you feel guilty inside your heart from abandoning a helpless beautiful girl?!"

"I had put it behind in the depth of the hell. Furthermore, don't call yourself a beautiful girl!"

"Th, then if you help me… …I, I will listen to one request from you, anything is fine"

The rabbit eared girl leaned closer with blush and upturned eyes. Cunning, truly cunning action. If the face weren't sullied by the tears and the dripping nose, it would surely be charming. Actually, if you look at the dirty girl closer, she who called herself beautiful, her appearance seems to be fairly good, a pretty girl with white hair and blue eyes. If it was an average guy, they would get swoon over even if she was sullied.

But the one in front of her eyes weren't an ordinary man.

"I don't need that. Other than that, don't bring your filthy face closer, it's dirty."

It's a brutal anywhere you go.

"Fi, filthy!? The first thing said and it's filthy! It's too much! I firmly oppose i- 'Gwugaaa!' Hii~! Help~!"

The moment she raised her voice to oppose Hajime's words, the Tyrant let out a 'You guys, don't you dare to ignore me!' like roar, and start bending it's body to rush over.

The rabbit eared girl raised a miserable shriek while forcibly getting in between Yue and Hajime. Seemed to be annoyed, Yue kicked the rabbit eared girl who was trying to get on the Magic Powered 2-Wheeled Drive trying to drop her off, the rabbit eared girl desperately clung "I definitely won't release iiit!" while getting shoe mark imprinted on her cheek.

As if feeling ridiculed while looking at that scene, the Tyrant glared at Hajime and the others with more anger in the eyes, and finally, started to charge.

Immediately following, Hajime raised his hand and lock on the gun's muzzle to the Tyrant forehead. In the moment of less than 0.1 second, the process of aiming and firing were completed. With one gunshot, a straight flash line pierced the area between the Tyrant's eyes.

In an instant, after convulsing a bit, the Tyrant slowly fell sideway while making a tremor.

To that vibration, the rabbit eared girl reflexively let out "Hue?" sound like an idiot, and timidly showed her face between Hajime's armpit to see the end of that Tyrant's fate.

“It’s dead… That Daihedoa, with one blow…”

The rabbit eared girl opened her eyes wide with a surprised look on her face. Seems like that double headed Tyrant is called “Daihedoa”.

The rabbit eared girl dumbfounded and staring stiffly at the remains of the Daihedoa, while getting kicked by Yue and clinging to Hajime. Since a while ago, the long rabbit ears were brushing Hajime’s eyes, with seriously gloomy mood, ‘Enough’ Hajime elbowed her on the head to drop her down.

“Hebuu!!”

Letting out a groaning sound, and while shouting “My head~ my heaaad~”, the rabbit eared girl used both her hand to hold her head while writhing on the ground. After looking with a cold glance, Hajime poured magic into the Magic Powered 2-Wheeled Drive and advanced forward like nothing had happened.

Sensing that sign, the rabbit eared girl who was rolling on the floor grumbling suddenly jump up to wake up with frightful vigour, “I won’t let you get away~!” and once again clung to Hajime’s waist. As expected, she was considerably resilient.

“Thank you so much for the help! I am from the Rabbit clan one of the Hauria, My name is Shia! For now please save my companion!”

And, considerably shameless.

Hajime glance to the side looking at the clinging rabbit eared girl. Thus, right after getting out of the hell, with another troublesome matter, he let out another sigh.

* * *

Thank you for always reading.

Also thank you for any impressions, opinions, and mistyping reports.

Now then, it’s the starting of the 2nd chapter.

Without delay, a new character appeared. As what would happen after this, i haven’t thought of it.

As usual, I will write while thinking of wild idea, at worst.

Though I will release one chapter once every week, thank you for always reading

Did Hajime’s personality really become arrogant and evil?

Recently, I don’t know how an arrogant and evil person is like.

A certain stray hero or a wind contractor like personality would be ideal though… … it’s hard isn’t it?

Back to top

Chapter 8 : Shia Haulia's Circumstances

Even though it's sudden, but the plot is in progress

For absolutely different development that noticed… can't be helped.

* * *

"Please help my tribe!"

Rabbit-eared girl Shia Haulia's voice echoes in the canyon. Apparently this rabbit wasn't alone and her comrades were also in a similar predicament. She is very desperate, and though Yue kept increasing the strength of her kicks, there is no sign of letting go despite the shoe marks on her cheek.

Because she was so desperate, Hajime couldn't help… … using his Lightning-clad.

"ABABABABABABABABABABAABABABA!?"

After adjusting the voltage and current to non-lethal, she probably won't be able to move for a while. Shia's rabbit ears straightened out and her hair produced smoke. When Lightning-clad stopped, she fell down in convulsions.

"Geez, what a shameless rabbit. Shall we go, Yue."

"N…"

Because there was nothing else to do, Hajime started pouring magic into the bike.

But…

"I, I won't let go~"

Shia got up like a zombie and clung onto Hajime leg. Surprised, Hajime immediately stopped injecting magic into the bike.

"Y,you are just like a zombie. Although it's non-lethal… how did you get up? It scared me for a moment…"

"… Creepy."

"Uu~ What did you say! I also have something to say! Kicking and electrocuting me, that was so cruel! I'll sue you, you know! As apology, please help my clan!"

In her anger, Shia issued her demand with unexpected composure. Though Hajime thought about dragging her as she is, when he thinks she won't let go anytime soon and imagines a blood-stained rabbit-eared girl who keep clinging to him… It gave him chills.

"Geez, what is it? For now I'll hear it so let go. Eh, don't casually wipe your face with my coat!"

When he said he'll hear her out, Shia's face start to brigthen with a smile and she casually wipes her dirty face with Hajime's coat. What good ettiquete. Irritated, Hajime hit her and she let out a scream "Hagyun!" while crouching.

"I-I was hit again! Even father never hit me before! Look well at my beauty, and this proportion… can't be that you like male… so that's why you refuse my seduction back there! Al,afunn!?"

Because he heard some improper remark, with Shia in crouching position, Hajime give her a heel-drop at her head. Some vein can be seen in his forehead.

"Who's homo, annoying rabbit. now that you mention it how did you know that reference. Yue and you, where the heck did you learn that…? Well, let put that aside for now. Though I don't know where is that seduction gag come from, the reason I refuse your invitation because there is higher level bishoujo beside me. Try to look at Yue's dignified form and I can't understand where you get the nerve to seduce"

While saying that Hajime steal a glance at Yue. Hearing his word, Yue was covering her blushing cheek with her hand while shaking her body. Her hair reflecting the sunlight shine with star-like light. Her bisque doll-like skin now dyed in faint red, capable to charm anyone without exception.

Appearance different from the first time they met. Wearing pure white dress and black mini-skirt decorated with frill, a long coat with blue line spread from the top. Also, short boots and kneesocks. All of it are made from Oscar's clothes and demonic beast materials by Yue herself. It also have high durability to protect the user.

Meanwhile, Hajime wear similar clothing composed of black and red with black and red line coat. This is also made by Yue. At first Yue made him white clothes to give pair-look feeling, of course it was quite embarassing because of his white hair make him all-white, Hajime feel unpleasant about it then settled with current style.

Shia can only flinch with "Uu" when she see Yue's beauty. But there is one thing that need to be corrected by Hajime, because it was his subjective view without including proportion as well. In a word, when seen objectively Shia won't lose in term of a bishoujo.

A long and straight gray hair tinted with blue hue and clear-blue eyes. White eyebrows and eyelashes also her white skin made her figure feel mysterious. Her hand and feet also slender and long, rabbit ear and tail that move added to her loveliness. When seen, furry-lovers (kemona) surely will unconciously shed tear in gratitude.

Above all… there is one thing that Yue lack. That is to say Shia have big boobs and it also emphatized by her ragtag clothes, truly a weapon that can't keep silent. It shake violently everytime she move. Violently not just bounce, for confirmation.

In short, her confidence in her figure and style is not a strange thing. It can be said Hajime is the strange one, before he surely will "Rabbit ear!!" and Ru*ndaibu…

Even so, for Shia whose pride was damaged. The forbidden word was said…

"Bu-but! In case of chest it's my win! Didn't you see that girl is flat-chested!"

"Flat-chest."
"Flat-chest."
"Pettanko."

Her shout echoes in the valley. Yue who tremble in embarrassment suddenly get of from the bike with her expression hidden behind her bangs.

Hajime can only mutter "A~a" while looking at the sky and silently gesture to pray. Rabbit-ear, rest in peace…

In that time, It can be seen from Yue. A cliff deeper than Raisen Grand Canyon.

Yue whisper-like voice can be hear by the trembling Shia' rabbit ear.

—… Have you finished your prayer?

—… As if apologize can solve it

—… …

—… Just die! Just die!

""Storm Emperor""

—- A—-!!

Suddenly tornado appear and swallow Shia then launch her into the sky. Her scream echoes in the canyon. After 10 seconds, Gusha (TL note : or Bamm but Crunch is perfect I think)! she fall in front of Hajime and Yue.

Her convulsion with buried have completely similar to Inuoie's character. Completely gag-like. Though her figure was extraordinary what a child of failure. Only wearing ragtag clothes(?) and added with this, it can't be called nothing but garbage. Thing that must not be seen was seen because her upside down figure. Something like this can awake hundred years of love.

Yue seems to express "Job well done!" while wipe her sweat and walk to Hajime. With him sit on the bike she quitely stare at him.

"… Do you like it big?"

It truly an problematic question. If Hajime say "YES!" he will suffer the same fate as that regrettable rabbit that still convulsing now. That must be avoided.

"… Yue, it's not about the size. Who the partner is the most important"

"…"

For now, instead of decisive YES or NO, Hajime answer with something vague. Truly indecisive. Yue narrow her eyes in consent then silently sit on the back.

In secret, Hajime with cold-sweat try to find some topic to break the silence, but nothing come to mind. Hajime's Rai*Card truly useless.

However, immediately after his eyes glance at Shia that trying to free her head while her body tremble with both hands gripping the ground. In his mind, he tried to make this as their talking topic.

"She is moving… truly a zombie. Her endurance level truly above average…"

"… Nn"

After a long silence she answer and that make him relieved and at the same time Zubo(Plop) sound come out when Shia puller out her mud-covered head.

"Uu~ It looked with cruel eyes. Even though I didn't want to be seen like this"

With tear-filled eyes, Shia pat her ragtag clothes and muttering some unknown thing while crawling closer to Hajime. It truly like a horror film.

"Haa~, how high is your endurance? It's not normal you know… What are you?"

With Hajime's suspicousness, Shia sits up and finally tell her problem. She made serious expression while sitting in front of Hajime and Yue who are on the bike. Well it already late for a lot of thing but…

"Let me reintroduce myself, I am Shia Haulia from Haulia RabbitMan tribe. The truth is…"

Finally Shia began to summarized her story.

Shia and her tribe, Haulia RabbitMan tribe of hundred used to lived quitely in "Haltina sea of trees". RabbitMan tribe have excellent hearing and stealth skill, but their specs are low compared to other demi-human because of that they are ranked lower compared to other demi-human. They are gentle and dislike fighting, and treat the entire tribe as one family. In addition, they have excellent figure in general, different from elf's beauty. Because they are cute they are caught by empire to be enslaved and become a popular product.

One day in Haulia tribe, one of RabbitMan tribe, a girl was born with abnormality. Even though RabbitMan basically have dark blue hair, that child's hair is gray with blue hue.

Moreover, it has magic that demi-human didn't have, to directly manipulate magic. To be able to use a certain peculiar magic.

Of course the tribe was greatly puzzled. A child that impossible to born in RabbitMan tribe, no, even demi-human. It has power similar to demonic beast, normally it will be discriminated. However, she was born in RabbitMan tribe that has deep connection to each other as a family of hundred. Haulia tribe decide to raise the girl.

However, if her existence were found by the demi-human country "Faea Belgaen", she would be executed for sure. That is how much they despise demonic beasts. As the rule of this country as soon as a demonic beast is found it must be annihilated, there is a record of a person that expulsed for letting demonic beast away. In addition, there are discrimination of tribe, for a tribe that use magic they will be persecuted human and demi-human. Other race who wield magic already enter the sea of tree, but immediately killing them has become the usual.

Therefore, Haulia tribe hid the girl and raised her in secret for sixteen years. However, her existence was found out. Because of that, Haulia tribe escaped to Sea of tree before getting caught in Faea Belgaen.

There are other who decide to go to Northern mountain area for the time being, because there are mountain products. Although it was uncivilized, but it's better than caught by the empire or a slave trader.

However their attempt was crushed by the empire. Even though they arrived in Sea of Tree, they were immediately found by empire Soldiers. It was unknown why the Soldiers were there, but encountering 1 squadron, Haulia tribe had no choice but run away to south.

Though the men tried to obstruct to let women and children go, but there are differences in battle potential between trained empire soldier who can use magic and the gentle and peaceful RabbitMan tribe. When they notice, already half was captured.

They keep desperately running away to avoid annihilation and arrived at Raisen Grand Canyon as the last resort. Indeed, the imperial army won't come here where magic can't be used. Until everything is over the tribe will wait here. The tribe betting between attacked by demonic beast or the empire's Soldiers withdrawing come first.

However, empire's Soldiers didn't try to withdraw at all. They decided to wait at the canyon entrance where the platoon position themselves in (the staircase). They wait for RabbitMan tribe to come out when attacked by demonic beasts.

And that was what happened, the demonic beasts attacked them. After what happened they can't surrender to empire anymore. Between escaping the canyon or fleeing from demonic beasts, Haulia tribe only option was to escape into the canyon. That's why, they can jump into the depth…

"… When they come to, of the 60 people, only 40 left. They will be annihilated if this keeps up. Somehow help us!"

From the start Shia tried to appeal with regret and bitterness in her face. Apparently, Shia is the same as Yue and Hajime, an exception of this world. She was the same as Yue in particular an atavism.

After finished listening to the story Hajime answer fankly without any change in his expression.

“I refuse.”

Back to top

Chapter 9 : Contract Completed

“I refuse.”

A frank word from Hajime resulted in silence. With an expression as if she doesn’t understand what was said, Shia opened her mouth with a stupid expression and stared intently at Hajime. Then, Hajime who already heard her story, started to pour magic into his bike and a loud yell of protest can be heard.

“Wa, wa, wait! Why! No matter if you think of the flow it should be “How pitiful! Don’t worry!! I’ll do something about it!!” with a reliable smile or something like that you know! As expected I also think it should be like that! Why, sudden encounter with a bishoujo and you just ignore it! Eh, ah, ignoring me and going! I won’t let you, you know~””

Her protest ignored, Shia jump to cling onto Hajime’s leg again. From serious and serene atmosphere a while ago, her shameless rabbit mode is back.

Glaring at Shia who won’t show any sign of releasing his feet, Hajime only releases a sigh.

“You know… Is there any merit for me if I help you.”

“Me-merit?”

“Being chased from the empire, being chased from the forest, you’re nothing but a seed of troubles, there is only demerit. Assuming you escaped from the canyon, what’s next? Won’t you just get caught by the empire or will you flee to the mountain. Then, what will you do? Rely on me again right? This time it was to protect from the empire’s Soldiers and escape from the northern mountain range, right.”

“Uu, tha-that is… … bu-but!”

“The two of us have a purpose in this travel. There is no time to do something so troublesome.”

“That can’t be… … but, even you can see the reason to protect!”

“… That, didn’t you say it a while ago. What do you mean?… Is it related to your peculiar magic?”

Hajime unable to undestand the meaning of the Shia’s tear filled story. Now that he thinks about it, why did Shia stray away from her comrade is a mystery. Hajime asked whether there is a relation with that.

“Eh? Ah, yes. It was called “Future Vision/Clairvoyance”, I can see a predicted future. If I choose to do this, what will happen? I can see something along that line… Also, in time of danger I can automatically see the future. Well, the future that I see isn’t absolute… Tha, that’s right. I am useful you know! WIth “Clairvoyance” we’ll know if there are danger! I saw it a while ago! I can see your figure helping us! In fact, it helped me to meet you!”

Shia continued her explanation, her “Clairvoyance” can predict future based on her choice of action and it need a large amount of magic to activate this and she will be exhausted in one try. In addition, there are times when it’ll be automatically activated, whether she wants it or not, when the situation will be dangerous for Shia. Although it also consumes a large amount of magic, it seems only to consume 1/3 of the usual.

Apparently, Shia left her former place to find Hajime or something along that line? Choosing her action, she found a future where Hajime protect her and her tribe. After that, she left in order to find Hajime. She was too excited, that’s why she moved alone in this dangerous place.

“If you have such amazing special magic, why did they found you? If you can predict the danger you won’t be found out in Faea Belgaen, right?”

When pointed by Hajime, Shia react with an “Ugh” while averting her eyes around.

“I,if I use it on my own then it’ll be unusable for a while…”

“That means you already used it before they found out… What the heck did you use it for?”

“That is, I’m anxious about my best friend’s romance”

“Isn’t that the same as peeping! The heck did you use precious magic for”

“Uu~I will seriously reflect from now on?”

“As expected, it’s useless. If you ask what is useless, you’re useless. This regrettable/failure rabbit”

Hajime looks away in amazement while Shia, crying, keep clinging to him. When Hajime prepared to go away, an unexpected help come to Shia.

“… Hajime, take her along”

“Yue?”

“!? From the start I think you’re a nice lady! I am sorry calling you flat-chest-afunh!”

Hajime dumbfounded when he hear Yue while Shia looks excited with sparkling eyes tried to say good things. Only one word too much then collapsed while suppressing her cheek that got slapped by Yue.

“… Just as a guide around Sea of Trees”

“A~”

Certainly, it is said only demi-human won’t get lost in Sea of Trees and if the RabbitMan tribe will guide them then that’s reassuring. Though there are some measures that I can think of when lost, but it can be said it was a rough idea without certainty. At worst, they will kidnap some demi-human to question about the road, but honestly if there are demi-human that willingly guide them is the best. However, Hajime hesitated because Shia have too much trouble in her hand.

Yue stared at Hajime to break his hesitation.

“… It’s okay, we are the strongest.”

That is the word Hajime said in the Abyss. They won’t hold back for this world. When they cover each other they are the strongest. Hajime can only give a wry smile hearing his own words.

With help from RabbitMan tribe, it will be easier to search around Sea of Trees. “Before the roots of the tongue dries, too (idiom, something along I don’t mean to be a liar but)” they might get into trouble with empire’s Soldiers and other demi-humans so they should be avoided. Of course, it’s not like they are busybodies, but if it was unavoidable because there are enemies in front of their best road. I have decided to even “kill” those obstructions.

“That is so huh. Oi, be glad regrettable/failure rabbit. I’ll make you our guide through the Sea of Trees. The reward will be your life (safety)”

It said without any mistake, but his line was completely Yakuza-like. However, even so, the promise to keep them safe come from a strong man who can easily kill the demonic beasts in the canyon make Shia so happy that she can fly.

“Tha, Thank you very much! Uu~ what a relief~, seriously what a relief~”

Shia cried with joy. However, she immediately stand up because there are no time to lose.

“U,umm, my best regard! Th, then what should I call you…”

“N? Now that you mention it… I am Hajime, Nagumo Hajime”

“… Yue”

“I see, Hajime-san and Yue-chan”

Shia said their name several time to remember it. But, Yue dissatisfied and objected her.

"… Use -san. Failure rabbit"

"Fue!?"

Shia was puzzled by Yue commanding tone, it seems she think Yue was younger because of her appearance. When she heard Yue is a vampire and older, she immediately apologize by prostrating. For Yue, it's not like she hate her. Though don't know why… For example when Yue glance at certain part of Shia there seems to be hatred, though the reason is not certain!

"Come, for now failure rabbit get on the back" (my note:and Yue hate-o-meter will be maxed when a part of Shia touch her)

Hajime, being used to Yue's brilliant mind, instructed Shia to hop on. And that's resulted in Shia's confusion. It can't be helped because there are no two wheeled vehicle that moves by using magic in this world. However, because Shia understood it was some kind of vehicle, Shia slowly sit behind Yue.

Even though it was a tandem seat using a certain demonic beast's leather, because Yue was small there is enough space for them. And Shia being suprised by the softness of the seat start leaning forward to Yue, pressing her weapon.

Yue who was suprised with the feels start to slip away to the front of Hajime. Her petiteness fit perfectly between Hajime's arms. Apparently, Yue can't stand the feeling of the weapon that hit her. Hajime reveal a wry smile after guessing the reason while Yue entrust her weight into Hajime have a bitter expression.

Shia say, "Eh? Why?" without understanding what happen, then cling to Hajime's waist with happy expression. Hajime as the usual just poured in his magic and drove along. It's not like he does react or anything if you ask him. But it was a lie if he say no.

Without noticing the conflict in Hajime and Yue's mind, Shia ask a question over Hajime's shoulder.

"U,umm. Even though faster is better… Is this a vehicle? What kind is it? Moreover, Hajime-san and Yue-san is a magic-user right? Even though it shouldn't be able to use here…"

"ah~, I'll explain on the way"

While said so, Hajime increase his magic and accelerate the bike. The vehicle move smoothly, over Hajime's shoulder, Shia's scream "Kyaaa~!" can be heard. The ground and wall seems to flow to their back as they go.

In the bottom of the canyon Shia clung tightly into Hajime while closing her eyes because of the speed, after a while maybe because she get accustomed to it, Shia gradually becoming excited. When Hajime goes around a curve to avoid a large rock, she make noise excitedly.

On the way, Hajime start to explain why they can use magic and drive this bike, about how Hajime's arms was something like an artifact. And Shia only able to open her eyes wide in astonishment.

"Eh, then, both of you also able to directly manipulate magic, also capable to use unique magic…"

"Ahh, something like that"

"… N"

For a while Shia's mind turn blank in surprise, suddenly, she buried her face onto Hajime's shoulder. Then, somehow start to sobs.

"… What is it now? Once become noisy then get depressed and now crying… You are trully emotionally unstable"

"… Too late?"

"What is too late? What do you mean? I am normal! … It just that, when I think I'm not alone… Somehow it make me happy…"

""…""

It seems because of her ability similar to the demonic beast, she always think she was the only one in this world and that make her feel the solitude. Her family raised her for 16 years and called her a family member although it brought dangers to them, even fleeing into Sea of Trees for her sake, that must be their affection. Even so, no, because of it, the feeling of solitude because "she was different from the others" can be felt.

Hearing Shia's words, Yue turned silent while thinking. It seem her expresionless face is losing more color. Hajime is somehow able to understand Yue feelings now. Probably, Yue's circumstance almost the same as Shia. Both of them capable to directly manipulate magic and using unique magic, With no one that can be called "kin" in that era.

But, there is a definite difference between them. While Yue did not have family that love her, Shia had. That's something give her a complex feeling along with envy. Added that from Shia's perspective, Yue was a "kin" that she finally met. It was a complicated matter.

To Yue's head, Hajime patted then stroked it.For Hajime who was raised in rich country, Japan, with affection received from the parents, although there are no "kin"-like existence, the solitude that he feels can't be compared to existence of a Queen, of Yue. Therefore, he doesn't have anything to say that can help her. He can only show her that she is not alone "now".

Even though Hajime had completely changed, but there is still kindness for those he cares about. Rather, if he didn't met Yue, that would have also disappear from him. Yue is the one who stopped Hajime from falling into the path of heresy/scum. Because Yue is here, Hajime can retain his humanity. As proof, Hajime will protect her promise with Shia. To protect Haulia tribe from empire's Soldiers so they can guide him in the Sea of Trees.

Whether Hajime's feelings were transmitted or not, Yue let loose her tension and lean her back into Hajime. As if she want to be spoiled.

"Umm~ Did you forget me? Here I said "It big news. I am not alone anymore. Because I have you by my side" or something like that then I cry? I, need to be comforted you know? To be spoiled you know? Even so, even though the chance is here, why suddenly you go to your own world! I am lonely! Please take me too! Even though, you two…"

""Silence failure rabbit""

"… Yes… Sob…"

To the whimpering Shia, suddenly make a ruckus that make Hajime and Yue shout instinctively. However, to left alone crying girl and make the world of two can be called cruel. Added that she got yelled, Shia was truly pitiful. But, her strength is her strong point. In her mind "First I must make them call me by name~ after all they are comrades I finally found. I won't let them go~!" became her new goal.

Meanwhile, Yue and Hajime yelled echoed then demonic beasts' roar can be heard in the distance. Apparently there are lot of demonic beasts in front of them.

"! Hajime-san! We will arrive soon! That demonic beasts' voice is… close! Close to father and the other's place!"

"Daa~, don't shout near my ear! Did you hear! Hang on tight because I'll increase our speed!"

Hajime pour even more magic power, and the bike start to accelerate further. Wall and ground flow past them fast.

After 2 minutes. They stop with a drift when they see dozen of RabbitMan tribe are under attack.

Back to top

Chapter 10 : Haulia Tribe and Encounter

Haulia Tribe and EncounterScreams echo inside Raisen Grand Canyon.

Figures of desperate RabbitMen fleeing to hide behind rocks can be seen. If you look around you can see 20 RabbitMen hiding behind rocks. If combined with those hidden there should be around 40 people.

In the sky, flying-type demonic beasts that were rare even inside the abyss are glaring at the frightened RabbitMan tribe. If you ask, their appearance are similar to the monster called

Wyvern. With span/height around 3-5 meters, sharp claws and fang, also equipped with sharp thorn at the swelling end of their long tail similar to morning star.

“Hy-hyveria…”

Over his shoulder, Shia’s trembling voice can be heard. It seem those Wyvern-like creatures are called “Hyveria”. There are six of them, trying to catch the RabbitMan tribe while circling in the sky.

Finally one of Hyveria takes action. After rotating in the sky, it dives towards one of the large rocks where some RabbitMan tribe members are and strikes the rock with its tail helped by centrifugal force. Along with deafening sound, the rock was crushed and the RabbitMen came out screaming.

As if saying “I’ve been waiting”, the Hyveria starts to devour the helpless prey by opening its jaw. It’s aimed at two RabbitMen. What’s left is a body without waist and unmoving small child that the man from the RabbitMan tribe tried to cover.

Seeing those scene, despair can be seen on the other RabbitMan tribe. Because who knows when their others family member will be Hyveria prey. But, that’s not what happened.

The reason is there is someone who contracted to help them, the monster who escaped the abyss…

DOPANn!!DOPANn!!

Two flashes and sound of gunshot can be heard in the canyon. One of the shot aimed at middle of the head of that attacking Hyveria. With a hole in its head, it falls to the side of the two crouching rabbit producing a cloud of dust, its roar stopped.

At the same time, a tremendous sound can be heard behind them. Without any time to be surprised, the RabbitMan tribe turn around, they saw one of the Hyveria lose its arm with blood bursting from it while writhing in pain. Soon some of the RabbitMan tribe lose strength in their waist. That’s because while they are focused on the first Hyveria, they didn’t notice another Hyveria come close to them. Of the two bullets, the other one’s shot through the second Hyveria’s arm. Losing its balance, it falls to the ground while writhing in pain.

“Wh-what is…”

At that time, the man who tried to cover the child can mutter that while alternating his vision between the Hyveria that died after being shot in the head and the one that is writhing in the back.

In addition, when he heard the gunshot, he could only see the flash of something coming at the Hyveria. Suddenly the Hyveria collapsed causing the earth tremor, when it stopped, it was dead already.

Seeing their comrade is dead, the other Hyveria in the sky roared in rage at the same time. To the cowering RabbitMan tribe, they can hear a sound that never heard before because of their excellent hearing. The high-pitched “Kiiiiiii” sound, similar to that of a jet. This time another

sound comes and they turn their eyes to the source, what they see is a black vehicle, from that 3 figures can be seen coming in highspeed.

Of the three, one of them is someone they know too well. In the morning, she suddenly disappeared, she is the girl they are looking for in the first place. She feels it was her fault that the tribe is in the state they are now, trying to conceal it with her cheerfulness, but her expression shows her anguish. Thinking of reckless things, while worrying she suddenly disappears. At the same time, carefully the Haulia tried to look for her. Even though, they thought the tribe will be annihilated before finding her…

The rabbit-eared girl fly in the sky with high speed. Shia's scream echoes in the canyon. The RabbitMan tribe scream "Shia?!" looking at this unbelievable spectacle with their eyes popped. The Hyveria also roared trying to catch the prey that coming to them, but Shia who stiffened and staring at the sky just fly passed their eyes.

That girl waving at them from the black vehicle. Cheerfulness can be seen in her face. And the RabbitMan tribe look at her with expression as if they can't believe what they saw.

"Everyone~, I have called for help~!"

When they hear her voice, they finally believe it was real then all of the RabbitMan tribe called her name.

" " " " " " " " " "Shia! ?" " " " " " " " " "

Hajime made an irritated expression while driving the magic bike in high speed. After confirming her family safety, Shia standing up on the bike while waving in happiness. Even though that is fine, but so that she won't fall from the bike moving in high speed, Shia lean her body to Hajime and her heavy-weight lethal weapon bouncing up and down, then hit his head. Because of that his aim shifted and the second Hyveria didn't get killed.

Hajime gripped Shia clothes who was jumping up and down with"pyokopyoko" to stop her. Shia who noticed it try to question him. But even if she can't see Hajime's face, because she noticed the atmosphere, she timidly asked.

"U,umm, Hajime-san? What happened? Why did you grip my clothes?"

"… If you're so energetic that it obstruct the combat, I thought I'll give you a job."

"J,job… W,what should I do?"

"It's easy, just go to the front of those starving demonic beasts. Easy right"

"!? Wa, What are you, ah, don't lift me~, don't swing me~"

Shia who's struggling with nervous expression was lifted easily by Hajime who has more than 10.000 Strength(Str).

Hajime, who is driving the two wheeler (bike) with one hand starts drifting and with expression telling there is no need to talk, throws Shia to the sky with the help of centrifugal force.

“Go! Failure Rabbit!”

“Iya-aaa~~!!”

Because of that, Hajime won’t miss that chance. Those flying Hyveria has become easy targets. Four gunshots can be heard simultaneously, it penetrate those Hyveria’s jaws and their heads crushed.

Without time to scream, the Hyveria lose their power and fall to the ground. They are stronger than that double-headed tyrano-like “Daihedoa” that attacked Shia, in this canyon they are known as dangerous and troublesome demonic beast, it’s hard to resist their attack. When looked by their predator eyes, the RabbitMan tribe stiffened.

With their ears, they can hear the girl’s sceam becoming closer.

“A-aaaaa~, help me~, Hajime-sa-~n!”

Hajime pass through the RabbitMan tribe that start running to catch her and splendidly catch the falling Shia then stopped the two wheeler (bike) with a drift. After that, he throws Shia away with a “Pei-“.

“Afun-! Uu~, I want you to be gentler~. I want better treatment~. I want you treat me as important as Yue-san~”

Shia protest while sobbing. It’s not like Shia loved Hajime. It just that, within the despair she currently in when she “see” hope, Hajime, a mysterious sense of trust is born. Even though his character is completely without mercy, he won’t betray his promise. Added that Hajime and Shia are in a similar circumstance. “Similar” because she can feel something familiar about him, also that Hajime cherished Yue who is the “same” as her. She understand that even with the short time they are together. Because of that she hope that happen to “me too”.

With the impact of catch and release, her ragtag clothes becoming more worn out added that her crying as she kicking around, Shia’s appearance is so pitiful. As expected it was too much… when he think so, he take out a coat from the treasure warehouse and put it at Shia’s head. I don’t want to be involved anymore than this, he thought without any remorse.

However, even with this Shia was happy. Suddenly something was put on her head and when she saw it, it was a coat and start to laugh. She immediately wears it. It was the same white coat with blue hue as Yue. The same one that Yue made for Hajime to form pair-look.

“Mo,mou! Hajime-san is just not honest huh~, It was similar clothe as Yue… I-is it “my woman appeal”? It’s bad you know~, I am not that cheap you know, please be more affectionate~”

Shia said that gripping the coat’s hem with “Iyaniyan” look. And that make Hajime irritated again, he silently pull out Donner, aimed at Shia then fired it.

“Hakyun!”

The bullet that fired was non-lethal bullet coated with rubber-like leather of a demonic beast. It just that, because of the firepower, Shia jumped back and fall to the ground then rolling around in pain. She scream “My head~ My head~”. But, as expected of her endurance, she immediately gets up. To that Shia, the RabbitMan tribe start to gather to get her treated.

“Shia! Are you okay!?”

“Father!”

The one who called her was a middle aged rabbit-eared man with short dark blue-hair. It’s clear whose rabbit-eared old man he is. This spectacle give out surreal feeling for him, immediately Shia and her father start to talk to the others RabbitMan tribe about what happened. After ensure that they are safe, they look at Hajime.

“Is it okay to call you Hajime-dono? I am Kam, Shia’s father and also the chief of Haulia tribe. I can’t thank you enough for helping Shia and our tribe out of the predicament. Even helping us escape… As father and the chief, I wish to express my gratitude”

Kam, who introduced himself as the chief of Haulia immidiately bows to him. Behind his back the others Haulia tribe did the same.

“Well, please raise your head. But, when it’s over be our guide in the Sea of Trees. Don’t forget that you know? Also, aren’t you trusting us too easily. Even though demi-humans and humans aren’t in good relationship with each other…”

Forgetting about Shia’s existance, in this world demi-humans are discriminated. In fact, they are cornered here because of a human. Even so, they bow to Hajime that is clearly a human and accepted Hajime’s help. Even though that is the only method left, isn’t it too simple? Hajime started to doubt them whilst concealing his disgust.

To that, Kam answer with a wry smile.

“You’re trusted by Shia. By association we trust you too. It’s because we are family…”

Hearing the answer, Hajime was half-amazed and half-admiring them. For a tribe to leave their hometown for the sake of a single girl and to be able to trust a human they just met truly their caution is so thin. It can be said their personality is too kind.

“Ehehe, it’s okay father. Even though Hajime is without mercy even to women, move without any concern to others, so cruel that he easily uses others as a decoy, he will protect his promise, he is not a scum who’d trample other’s hope! He will protect us for sure!”

“Ha ha ha, so that is. In other words a shy person huh. If that’s so, I believe him”

Hearing Shia and Kam, the other tribe members also said “I see, a shy one huh” while looking at Hajime with warmth in their eyes then nod their head.

Hajime with vein appear at his head start to pull out Donner, but he was ambushed.

“… N, Hajime is a shy one (in the bed)”

“Yue!?”

While Hajime was shocked, demonic beasts are gathering to their place and surely will become troublesome if they keep still, so they start to depart.

They are advancing to the exit of the Raisen Grand Canyon as the goal.